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Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation: follow-up to policy recommendations of the General Assembly and the Council

Implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/243 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, 2018

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

The present report is submitted in response to General Assembly resolution 71/243 and comprises the first annual overview of the progress achieved and challenges encountered in the implementation of that resolution.

The report was prepared in consultation with the United Nations development system, based on the strategic plans, annual reports and other documents made available by the system. It also benefited substantially from four surveys administered by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat and the information management system administered by UNDG. Financial data was primarily sourced from the database and reporting system managed by CEB.

* E/2018/1.

** The present report was submitted late owing to the extensive United Nations system-wide consultation process required and the late feedback received from the four surveys conducted by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat.

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Abbreviations

CEB	United Nations system Chief Executives Board for Coordination
DOCO	Development Operations Coordination Office
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
ICT	Information and communications technology
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFI	International financial institution
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMO	International Maritime Organization
ITC	International Trade Centre
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD/DAC	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/ Development Assistance Committee
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OIOS	Office of Internal Oversight Services
PAHO	Pan-American Health Organization
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund

UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNISDR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
UNU	United Nations University
UNV	United Nations Volunteers programme
UN-Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNWTO	World Tourism Organization
UPU	Universal Postal Union
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

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I. Introduction

1. The landmark agreements reached in 2015 — the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development — with their call for a revitalized global and multi-stakeholder partnership for people, the planet and prosperity, are unprecedented in scope and significance. They imply a fundamental shift in the development cooperation paradigm. This paradigm shift, coupled with the profound changes in the development cooperation landscape, demand a bold rethinking of the United Nations development system to ensure that it is fit to support Member States' efforts in pursuit of sustainable development.

2. To that end, Member States debated the implications of the interlinkages between the alignment of functions, funding practices, governance structures, organizational arrangements, partnership approaches, capacity and impact of the United Nations development system during the 18-month dialogue in the Economic and Social Council on the repositioning of the system. In late 2016, the General Assembly provided guidance through its resolution 71/243 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development. The quadrennial review is aimed at enhancing the system's coherence, effectiveness and efficiency to address the full range of development challenges of our time, as set out in the 2030 Agenda. To move towards the system-wide response needed to deliver the shared results that the 2030 Agenda demands, Member States broadened the scope of the quadrennial review by calling upon all entities of the United Nations development system engaged in operational activities for development to fully implement the resolution consistent with their mandate, role and expertise, and requested the Secretary-General to put forward his proposal on a set of key areas by December 2017.

3. In response, in July 2017 the Secretary-General presented his vision for a system that will act as a catalyst for action, an innovator, a convener and a champion of what works. The vision presents a system that is more strategic, accountable, transparent, collaborative, efficient and effective in delivering results at the country level (A/72/124-E/2018/3). Additional details of the Secretary-General's vision are set out in his December 2017 report (A/72/684-E/2018/7), where he presents his proposals on immediate shifts in the way the system operates, as well as adjustments to the long-term course of action, for Member States' consideration in 2018.

4. The present document is intended as a report on the steps taken so far regarding the mandates emanating from the quadrennial comprehensive policy review for which Member States have already charted the way forward. On the basis of facts and accounts from the ground, it assesses how the system is shifting vis-à-vis the new mandates, so as to better support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the national, regional and global levels.

5. The evidence suggests a mixed picture in terms of progress. Alignment of the system's planning and activities with the quadrennial review is still in its initial stages, partly because of the sequencing of internal planning and management alternatives, which need to follow from forthcoming decisions by Member States. A common chapter in the strategic plans of four United Nations entities for 2018–2021 that commits to working better together with stronger coherence and collaboration is a first step. However, the specifics of decisions on a whole-of-system response, including the leadership and authority of the resident coordinator, differentiated models of presence, a common back office and the new skill sets required to support

the delivery of the new 2030 Agenda are essential determinants that remain to be addressed.

6. Another key challenge evidenced by the data in the present report is the continuing fragmented nature of the system's funding and how it is inconsistent with the principles of integration and coordination. In addition, data from the ground suggest that the United Nations development system continues to struggle to deliver a coherent response around collective results. This is explained by organizational cultures and arrangements that are not conducive to a whole-of-system response, including slow progress in harmonization and simplification of business practices, as well as a disconnect between the practical implementation of joint operations in the field and gaps in efforts at the headquarters level. The Secretary-General's proposals in his December 2017 report aim to systematically address these challenges and gaps.

7. The full shift needed to move to a mindset, skills sets, architecture and organizational arrangements based on the Sustainable Development Goals rather than on the Millennium Development Goals is still in progress, partly as it awaits decisions by Member States on critical elements. Yet, a broad range of actions is under way towards a more cohesive approach to key functions, such as support to capacity development and policy advice, backed by a significant effort to generate the guidelines and instruments necessary to better equip United Nations country teams to deliver on the ground.

8. The present report serves as the evidence base of the current situation in relation to mandates for immediate implementation.

II. Aligning the United Nations development system to the 2030 Agenda

9. In the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review (resolution 71/243), the General Assembly requires the system to step up to the ambition of the 2030 Agenda. Alignment with the 2030 Agenda begins with a repositioning of the work of the United Nations so that the Organization is able to deliver shared results through a system-wide approach. To that end, resolution 71/243 broadens the scope of the quadrennial review to include all entities of the United Nations development system carrying out operational activities for development, and reaffirms that those entities should align their planning and activities, including through their governing bodies where applicable, for the full implementation of the resolution.

10. This means that, in addition to the funds, programmes and other United Nations entities that are already included in the mandate of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, 13 United Nations specialized agencies (listed in box 1) could potentially become part of the full implementation of the quadrennial review of a United Nations development system consisting of 44 entities that receive funding for operational activities for development.[1]

[1] There are no commonly agreed definitions of the terms "United Nations development system" and "operational activities for development". For the purposes of the funding analysis, the definitions include those entities and activities linked to contributions in line with the definition of ODA provided by OECD. This is not intended to imply that entities listed as part of the United Nations development system for the funding analysis are part of it for other purposes. For example, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat is not part of the United Nations development system for purposes other than those of the funding analysis.

Box 1
The United Nations development system

Funds and programmes (9)	UNDP (including the Capital Development Fund and UNV), UNEP, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNRWA, UN-Women and WFP
Secretariat departments (13)	Department of Economic and Social Affairs, ECA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP, ESCWA, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, OHCHR, UNCTAD, Department of Political Affairs, UNISDR, UNODC and Peacebuilding Support Office
Specialized agencies (13)	**FAO, ICAO, IFAD, ILO, IMO, ITU, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNWTO, UPU, WHO, WIPO and WMO**
Research and training institutions (6)	United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, UNITAR, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, United Nations System Staff College and UNU
Other entities (3)	ITC, UNAIDS and UNOPS

11. Alignment of the strategic planning and budgetary cycles is a first step towards coordinated and coherent action. Excluding Secretariat departments and the regional commissions, which have a different planning and budgetary cycle, 13 entities are now fully aligned with the quadrennial comprehensive review process, 5 are in progress towards alignment and 8 are not aligned (see table 1).

Table 1
Alignment of strategic planning cycles with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review cycle

	Strategic planning cycle		*Alignment with quadrennial comprehensive policy review cycle*	
Entity	*Time frame*	*Number of years*	*2016*	*2018*
Funds and programmes				
UNDP (including UNV and Capital Development Fund)	2018–2021	4	Yes	Yes
UNEP	2018–2021	4	Yes	Yes
UNFPA	2018–2021	4	Yes	Yes
UN-Habitat	2014–2019	6	No	No
UNHCR	2018–2019	2	Yes[a]	Yes
UNICEF	2018–2021	4	Yes	Yes
UNWRA	2016–2021	6	In progress	In progress[b]
UN-Women	2018–2021	4	Yes	Yes
WFP	2017–2021	5	Yes	In progress[c]

	Strategic planning cycle			*Alignment with quadrennial comprehensive policy review cycle*	
Entity	*Time frame*		*Number of years*	*2016*	*2018*
Specialized agencies					
FAO	2018–2019	2020–2021	2	Yes	Yes
ICAO	2017–2019		3	No	No
IFAD	2018–2021		4	Yes	Yes[d]
ILO	2018–2021		4	Yes	Yes
IMO	2016–2021		6	No	No
ITU	2016–2019		4	No	No
UNESCO	2018–2021		4	Yes	Yes
UNIDO	2018–2021[e]		4	In progress	In progress
UNWTO	–		–	–	No
UPU	2017–2020		4	No	No
WHO	2014–2019		6	No	No
WIPO	2017–2021		5	In progress	In progress[f]
WMO	2016–2019		4	No	No
Research and training institutions					
UNICRI	–		–	–	No
UNIDIR	2017–2020		4	No	No
UNITAR	2018–2021		4	Yes	Yes
UNRISD	2016–2020		5	No	No
UNSSC	–		–	–	No
UNU	2015–2019		5	No	No
Other entities					
ITC	2016–2017		2	In progress	Yes
UNAIDS	2016–2021		6	In progress	In progress[g]
UNOPS	2018–2021		4	Yes	Yes

Note: For a full list of the entities covered by the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review, see box 1.

[a] Considered to be fully aligned with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review given that the two-year cycle is consistent with the quadrennial review.

[b] UNRWA operates within a six-year strategic planning cycle and General Assembly approved biennial programme plans. It plans to align its next cycle with the quadrennial review in 2021.

[c] WFP submitted its 2017–2021 strategic plan one year early, as an exception, with a five-year duration that would enable a return to the four-year strategic plan duration foreseen by its General Rule VI.1 in 2018.

[d] IFAD has three-year medium-term plans aligned to the three-year replenishment cycles, as it is an international financial institution with funding determined though replenishment exercises.

[e] The UNIDO strategic plan (initially the medium-term programme framework 2016–2019) was extended to 2018–2021 to align it to the quadrennial comprehensive policy review cycle. The budgetary cycle is still biannual (current 2018/9).

[f] The WIPO medium-term strategic plan is for six years (2016–2021) and its budget covers a period of two years (2018–2019 and 2020–2021).

[g] UNAIDS joint budgets are prepared and presented on a biennial basis. The Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework extends for a six-year period and is synchronized with the planning cycles of the co-sponsors.

12. The degree to which entities are aligning their planning and activities with the quadrennial review varies.

13. In response to requests from their governing boards to work in a more integrated and coherent manner, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN-Women have developed a common chapter for their strategic plans, which identifies and elaborates on specific areas of collaborative advantage. The entities propose to use the mainstreaming, acceleration and policy support strategy[2] as a key entry point to build the case for prioritization of and investment in activities to ensure that no one is left behind. This new approach should be viewed as a first step towards creating a more collective approach to the strategic planning of the United Nations development system.

Figure I
Integrated country-level response by the United Nations to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals

Source: 2017 UNDAF guidelines.

14. UNDG has updated its guidelines and instruments to better support United Nations country teams in helping Governments to accelerate progress towards the 2030 Agenda, and to ensure that the system's plans, strategies and tools strengthen national ownership and respond coherently to national development needs (see figure I). This includes updating the *Mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Reference Guide for United Nations Country Teams* and the creation of

[2] See United Nations Development Group concept note, available from https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/MAPS-Concept-Note-Oct-2015-ENDORSED-BY-UNDG-on-26.10.15.pdf.

a searchable online compendium[3] to support diagnostics, methodologies and risk-informed planning; guidelines to trigger system-wide support for national statistical institutions and reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals; revised UNDAF guidelines with companion pieces to inform a strategic response to the 2030 Agenda;[4] and policy and operational support for country teams on human rights.[5]

15. An important achievement is that 85 per cent of programme country Governments reported that the United Nations system's activities are "very closely" or "closely" aligned with their development needs and priorities, while 15 per cent reported "somewhat aligned" activities. Respondents explained that this was achieved by aligning the UNDAF with national development plans; by focusing on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals; by using coordination mechanisms such as chairing of results groups by Governments; and through effective monitoring and evaluation. Constraints included a lack of a national plan or strategy, insufficient availability or use of data in programming, United Nations staff being located outside the country, fragmentation of United Nations activities, and misalignment of projects funded through non-core resources.

16. The United Nations development system is adjusting to the 2030 Agenda at the country level, although this clearly needs to be fast tracked. This is evidenced by 36 per cent of Governments which stated that the United Nations has contributed "to a great extent" to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in the past two years, and 45 per cent which reported "to a moderate extent".

17. Table 2 below shows the types of requests for support with the Sustainable Development Goals, with the least requested type being "on specific" Goals. Lower-income countries are generally more likely to request support across all four types. Notably, 3 out of the 10 countries with the largest programme expenditures did not request any kind of support, which is likely explained by these countries' ongoing humanitarian situations.

18. The largest number of requests are around "general orientations and mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals", showing that programme countries are beginning to adjust to the new Agenda.

[3] Sustainable Development Goals acceleration toolkit, available from https://undg.org/2030-agenda/sdg-acceleration-toolkit/.

[4] UNDAF companion guidance, available from https://undg.org/programme/undaf-companion-guidances/.

[5] Available from https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Policy-Operational-Support-to-UNCTs-on-HR-in-SDG-Implementation-FINAL....-1-1.pdf.

Table 2
Requests for United Nations support on Sustainable Development Goals

	Has your Government requested support on its national response to the Sustainable Development Goals?				
	Sustainable Development Goal measurement and reporting	*Requests on specific Sustainable Development Goals*	*General orientation on Sustainable Development Goals*	*Mainstreaming Sustainable Development Goals in national development plans*	*Total*
Income groups					
Low-income countries (31)	15	4	22	20	61
Lower-middle-income countries (49)	24	7	28	33	92
Upper-middle-income countries (43)	22	7	20	21	70
High-income countries (8)	5	3	6	3	17
Total (131)	**66**	**21**	**76**	77	**240**
Regional groups					
Eastern and Southern Africa (21)	10	5	14	12	41
Western and Central Africa (24)	9	5	16	19	49
Arab States (18)	9	2	5	7	23
Asia and the Pacific (24)	16	4	16	14	50
Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States (18)	8	3	11	12	34
Latin America and the Caribbean (26)	14	2	14	13	49
Total (131)	**66**	**21**	**76**	77	**240**

Source: UNDG information management system.

III. Funding of United Nations operational activities for development

19. The quality and quantity of funding deeply affects the ability of the United Nations development system to respond in a cohesive manner to deliver collective results. This section provides a detailed overview of the current funding of United Nations operational activities for development and provides evidence to inform changes that could better enable the system to support the delivery of the 2030 Agenda.

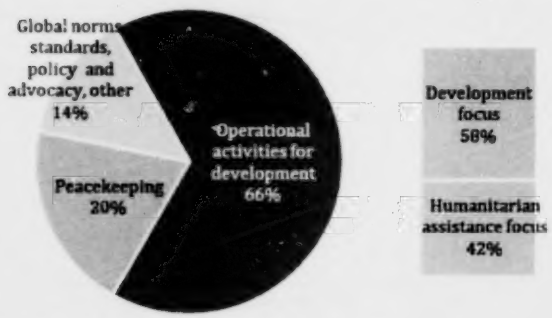
A. Context and overview of United Nations operational activities for development

20. United Nations operational activities for development are activities that United Nations entities carry out towards the promotion of development and the welfare of developing countries. Operational activities for development cover both longer-term development-related activities as well as those with a shorter-term humanitarian

assistance focus. The related online technical note[6] contains further information concerning funding definitions and classifications.

21. **Expenditure on United Nations operational activities for development totalled $30.4 billion[7] in 2016. This represented about two thirds of the $45.8 billion in expenditure on all United Nations system-wide activities.** Peacekeeping operations accounted for one fifth of total expenditures, while global norm- and standard-setting, policy, advocacy and other functions of the United Nations system made up the remaining 14 per cent (see figure II).

Figure II
Financing of United Nations system-wide activities, 2016


Global norms, standards, policy and advocacy, other 14%
Operational activities for development 66%
Peacekeeping 20%
Development focus 58%
Humanitarian assistance focus 42%

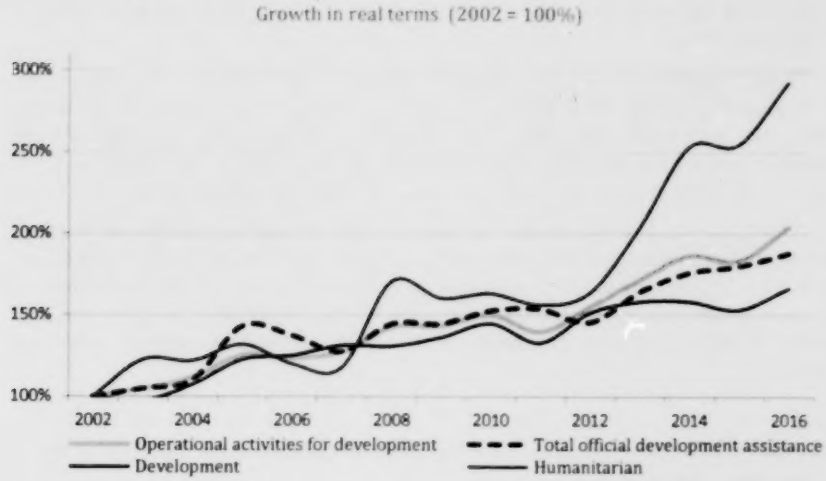
22. **Funding for United Nations operational activities for development accounted for 19.7 per cent of total ODA in 2016.**[8] Since 2002, funding for operational activities for development has grown steadily, following a similar trend as ODA, as shown in figure III. At the same time, funding for United Nations humanitarian activities has increased rapidly compared with that for development activities and overall ODA. This is particularly the case in recent years, with funding for humanitarian assistance increasing by 80 per cent between 2012 and 2016, in real terms, owing primarily to the crises in Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen.

[6] Forthcoming. Will be available from www.un.org/en/ecosoc/en/node/1158673.

[7] This amount differs slightly from the $29.5 billion in contributions received by the United Nations development system in 2016 since contributions are not necessarily expended in the same calendar year as they are received.

[8] Local resources ($1.9 billion) channelled through the United Nations development system are excluded, as they do not fall within the definition of ODA.

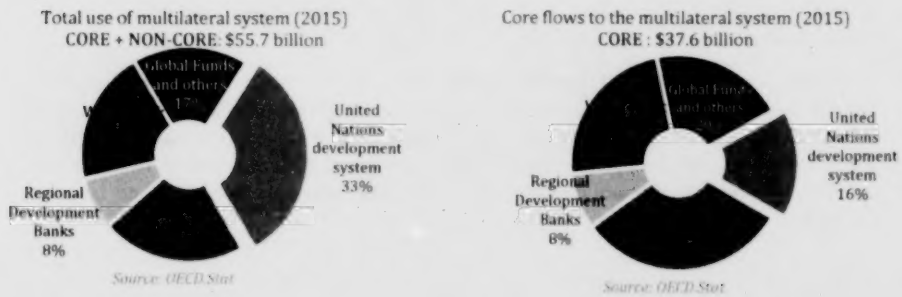
Figure III
Growth in official development assistance and funding for United Nations operational activities for development, 2002–2016



23. Notwithstanding the rapid increase in humanitarian funding, United Nations entities focusing primarily **on humanitarian assistance activities** (such as WFP, UNHCR, UNRWA and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance), **are reporting record-high gaps between budgetary requirements and funds received**.[9] These gaps underscore the need to ensure that development and humanitarian activities are mutually reinforcing. This could help to reduce humanitarian needs and vulnerability and manage the risks of future humanitarian crises, ultimately reducing over time the gaps and long-term funding requirements.

24. **The United Nations development system remains the largest single channel of multilateral aid** for OECD/DAC donors when core and non-core flows are combined. As shown in figure IV, it accounts for nearly one third of all disbursements to multilateral organizations. The total use of the multilateral system declined in 2015 by 11 per cent, to $55.7 billion.

Figure IV
Channels of multilateral aid, 2015


Total use of multilateral system (2015)
CORE + NON-CORE: $55.7 billion
Global Funds and others 17%
United Nations development system 33%
Regional Development Banks 8%
Source: OECD.Stat
Core flows to the multilateral system (2015)
CORE : $37.6 billion
United Nations development system 16%
Regional Development Banks 8%
Source: OECD.Stat

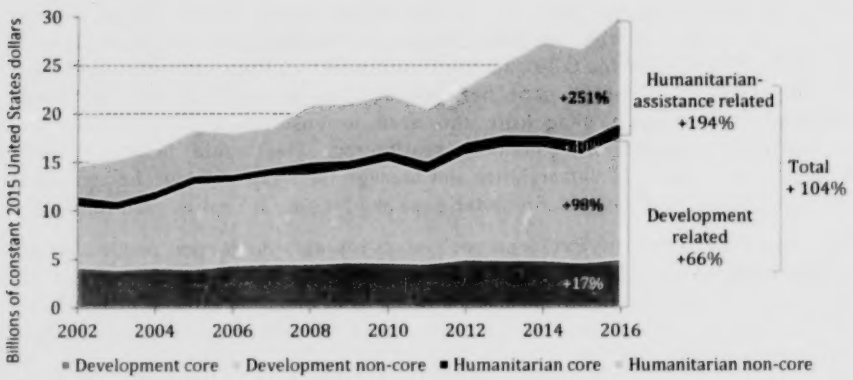
[9] See Financial Tracking Service, available from https://fts.unocha.org/appeals/overview/2016.

25. The United Nations development system is the only major multilateral channel of aid that relies heavily on non-core resources. In fact, excluding the United Nations development system, 84 per cent of the resources channelled to multilateral organizations are core, while **the system accounts for only 16 per cent of all core flows** (figure IV).

26. **Total contributions for United Nations operational activities for development reached $29.5 billion in 2016, representing an increase of nearly 8 per cent compared with 2015. This includes a 5 per cent increase in core contributions**, which ended two consecutive years of decline in core funding. Core contributions grew to $6.4 billion, or 21.7 per cent of total funding in 2016.

27. The longer-term trend shows that **real growth of funding for United Nations operational activities for development has more than doubled since 2002** (see figure V).[10] Yet, despite a heavy emphasis in resolutions of the General Assembly on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review on the importance of core funding, **growth in core resources has been small compared with growth in non-core resources**.

Figure V
Real change over time in funding for United Nations operational activities for development, 2002–2016



28. Since 2002, the core share of total funding has dropped from 37 per cent to 22 per cent and the core share of funding for development-related activities dropped from 41 per cent to 28 per cent. Only 18 per cent of total voluntary contributions for United Nations operational activities for development in 2016 were core.

29. The current nature of funding received by the United Nations development system significantly limits the system's degree of flexibility to deploy funding. The proposed funding compact is aimed at building trust and transparency with Member States and other prospective partners. This strengthened trust is essential to make the case for adequate quality and quantity of funding, including predictable levels of core funding.

[10] In the present report, comparisons and trend analyses in "real terms" are based on amounts expressed in constant 2015 United States dollars. Owing to the minimal effect of deflators since 2015, comparisons are stated in nominal terms unless otherwise noted.

30. Structured dialogues have been taking place within a number of United Nations entities in an effort to address funding-related issues. Since mid-2016, **17 out of 29 entities indicated that their governing body has held such dialogues to discuss how to finance the development results agreed in their strategic plan**. Some of the common themes in the dialogues across the system include: incentivizing donors to shift away from highly earmarked resources; strengthening transparency and accountability; exploring new partnership modalities towards resource mobilization; and incentivizing multi-year funding commitments.

31. The dialogues held by UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF indicate that achieving these objectives would require strengthening the quality of regular reporting on the use of core and flexible resources, including clarity on the functions being financed through these funds. During the dialogues held at FAO, the topic of increasing assessed contributions was considered but did not gain much traction. In contrast, the decision-making body of WHO approved a 3 per cent increase in Member States' assessed contributions for the period 2018/19.

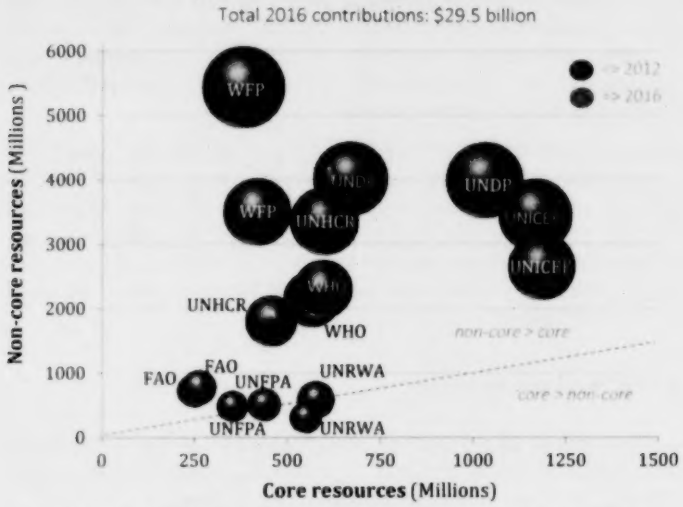
B. Funding to United Nations entities

32. **Funding is concentrated in a relatively small number of United Nations entities**, with the top eight (WFP, UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR, WHO, UNRWA, FAO and UNFPA) accounting for 84 per cent of all contributions in 2016.

33. Figure VI shows the core and non-core contributions received by the eight largest entities in 2016 (green bubbles) and in 2012 (blue bubbles). **For the five largest entities, the non-core component exceeded the core component by a significant margin in 2016**. In addition, for six of the eight entities shown, core resources were lower in 2016 compared with four years earlier. The two exceptions (UNHCR and UNRWA) are primarily focused on humanitarian assistance activities.

34. For the United Nations development system as a whole, the core share of total funding has dropped from 27.2 per cent to 21.7 per cent since 2012, indicating that the longer-term trend presented in figure V has continued in the shorter term.

Figure VI
Contributions received by United Nations entities, 2016

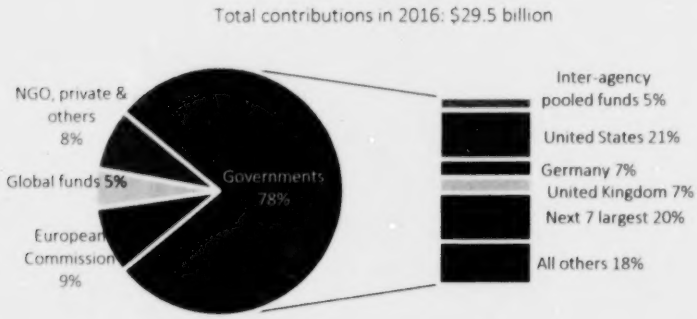


Note: Size of bubbles corresponds to relative total contributions (core + non-core)

1. Sources of funding

35. **A total of 78 per cent of contributions in 2016 were made by Governments directly** (see figure VII), including contributions provided to inter-agency pooled funds administered by a United Nations entity on behalf of the United Nations development system.

Figure VII
Main groups of funding sources, 2016

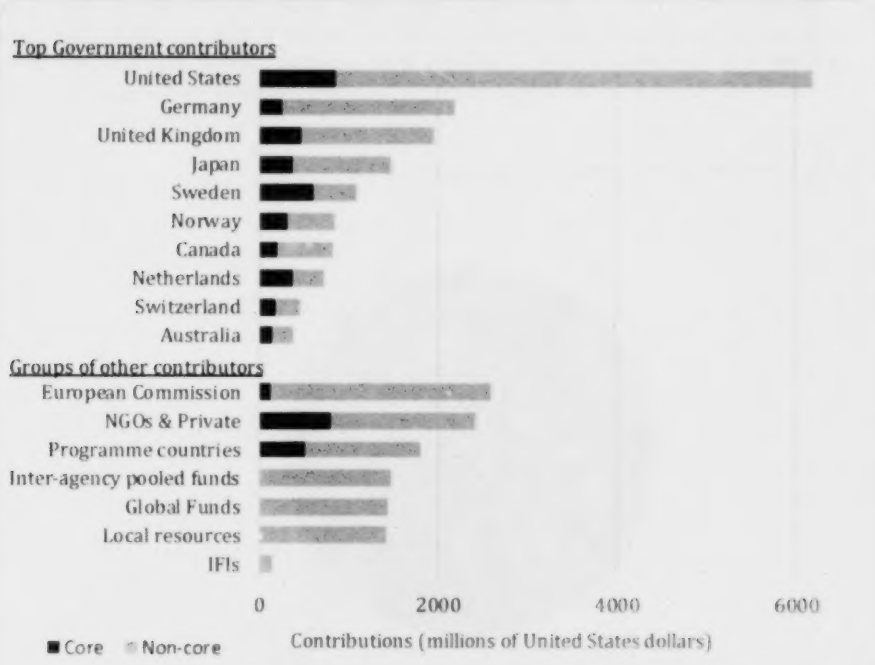


36. **A record high $2.6 billion was channelled to the United Nations development system through the European Commission in 2016**, more than any government donor apart from the United States of America, marking an increase of 66 per cent compared with 2015. The remaining 13 per cent is accounted for by NGOs,

private partnerships and other multilateral institutions, including global vertical funds.

37. Figure VIII shows the core and non-core contributions by the top government donors and groups of contributors. Together, the sources of funding presented in the figure accounted for 91 per cent of total funding in 2016. Among the top 10 government contributors, only the Netherlands and Sweden provided more core funding than non-core funding.

Figure VIII
Main contributors, 2016
(Millions of United States dollars)



38. General Assembly resolutions on the quadrennial review have repeatedly urged the United Nations development system to explore options to broaden and diversify its donor base. Out of 29 United Nations entities, 24 indicated reporting annually to their governing body on concrete measures to broaden their donor base. **However, the United Nations development system still relies heavily on a few donors.** In 2016, three donors (the United States, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Germany) accounted for 45 per cent of contributions received from Governments and 35 per cent of total contributions to the United Nations development system (see figure VIII).

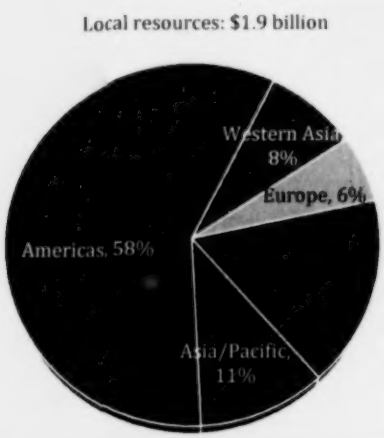
39. The donor base for core funding also depends on a small number of donors. Five countries (the United States, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Japan and the Netherlands) accounted for nearly 50 per cent of all core contributions from Governments in 2016, the same share for the top five core contributors based on 2011 data.

40. Such reliance on a limited number of donors makes the United Nations susceptible to a sudden shift in overall funding, should any of its top donors have a policy change.

41. **Programme countries contributed over $1.38 billion to the United Nations development system in 2016** (excluding local resources), a moderate decrease from the $1.55 billion in contributions in 2015. Saudi Arabia accounted for about one quarter of this funding, through sizable non-core contributions to humanitarian projects in Yemen and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Contributions from other programme countries were evenly split between core and non-core funding.

42. In addition, programme countries provided $1.9 billion in local resources to finance United Nations activities in their own countries (see figure IX). This represents 8 per cent of total non-core resources to the United Nations development system. This modality is most commonly used in Latin America and the Caribbean, where it accounted for over half of all local resources provided in 2016.

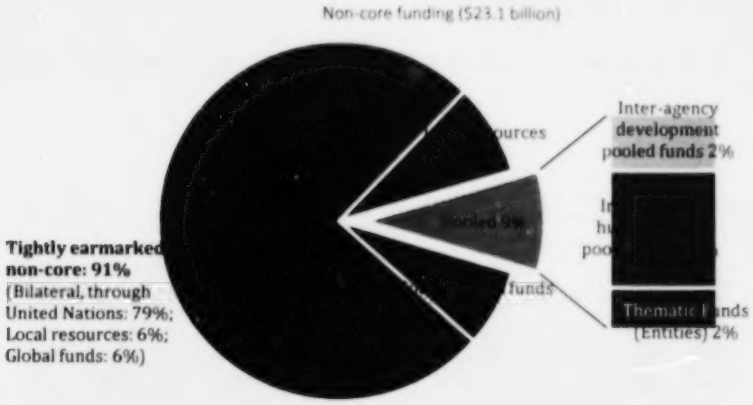
Figure IX
Local resources contributions, by region, 2016



2. Review of non-core funding modalities

43. Figure X shows the different forms of non-core resources received by the United Nations development system in 2016 and their relative volumes. **Of total non-core resources, 91 per cent continue to be restrictively earmarked to single entity projects**. Such high levels of earmarked funding discourage integrated approaches, often leading to increased transaction costs and fragmentation of resources.

Figure X
Non-core funding modalities for United Nations operational activities for development, 2016


Non-core funding ($23.1 billion)
Tightly earmarked non-core: 91%
(Bilateral, through United Nations: 79%; Local resources: 6%; Global funds: 6%)
Inter-agency development pooled funds 2%
Thematic funds (Entities) 2%

44. **The high level of tightly earmarked contributions is often associated with persistent competition for resources, overlaps and duplication**. It is clear that, under certain circumstances, competition among United Nations entities can be healthy. The 2015 DAC report on multilateral aid,[11] for instance, notes that competing sources of multilateral finance can stimulate the focus on institution-specific comparative advantages, thereby improving the efficiency of the multilateral system as a whole. However, the 2017 survey revealed that most Governments view competition among United Nations entities as unproductive. Among the possible disadvantages, 57 per cent of Governments stated that competition among United Nations entities creates confusion for the Government, and 55 per cent indicated it increases the workload of Government officials and diverts the attention of the United Nations away from the main tasks of providing support to the country.

45. The indivisible and interconnected nature of the Sustainable Development Goals has reinforced the need for more flexible, predictable and integrated multi-partner financing. To improve predictability and quality of resources, several funding modalities have been developed such that non-core funding from different sources is pooled at the level of individual entities and/or among entities. These modalities are a result of efforts by the United Nations development system to promote coherence, alignment and aid effectiveness, counterbalancing fragmentation.

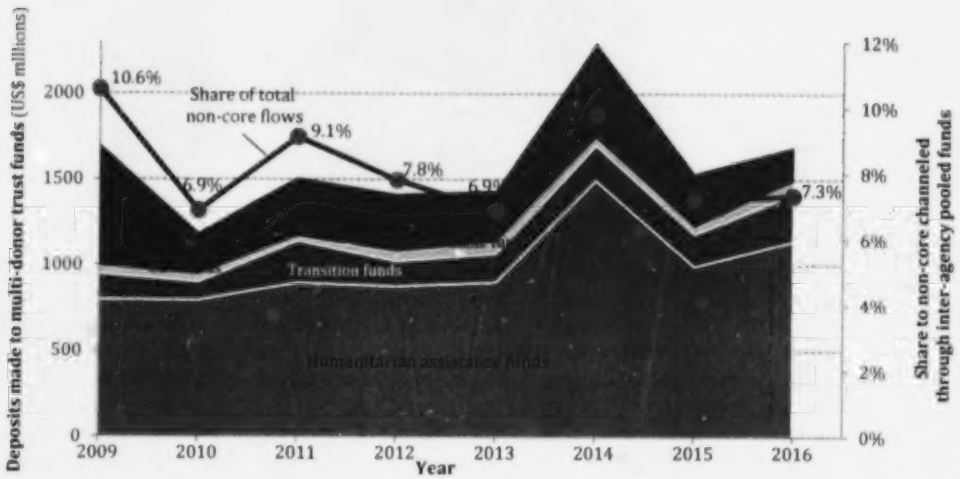
Inter-agency pooled funds

46. An inter-agency pooled fund is a multi-entity funding mechanism designed to support clearly defined programmatic scope and results by contributions that are co-mingled, not earmarked to a specific United Nations entity and held by a United Nations fund administrator. In these, the United Nations takes a lead role in making fund allocation decisions as well as fund implementation, which makes these funds a more flexible form of non-core contributions.

[11] OECD, *Multilateral Aid 2015: Better Partnerships for a Post-2015 World* (Paris, 2015).

47. Figure XI provides an overview of the trend in contributions made to inter-agency pooled funds, including a breakdown by theme. **There has been no noteworthy growth in funding for inter-agency pooled funds since 2009.**

Figure XI
Deposits made to United Nations-administered multi-donor trust funds, by fund category, 2009–2016

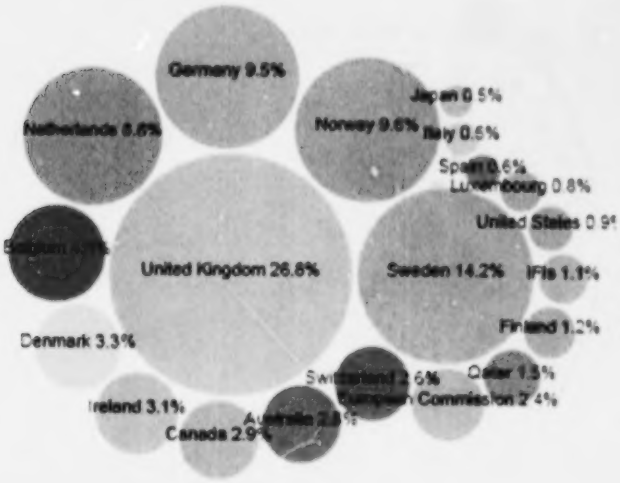


Source: United Nations database on inter-agency pooled funds.

48. One reason for the limited growth in funding to United Nations inter-agency pooled funds is the small number of donors that support this type of funding. In 2016, just three Government donors (the United Kingdom, Sweden and Norway) accounted for over half of all contributions to these funds, and the top eight accounted for nearly 80 per cent (figure XII).[12] The other 20 per cent of contributions came from 53 government donors, international financial institutions and the private sector. Viewed another way, 17 donors provided over 10 per cent of their 2016 non-core contributions to the United Nations to inter-agency pooled funds.

[12] United Kingdom, Sweden, Norway, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark and Ireland.

Figure XII
Top contributors to inter-agency pooled funds, 2016

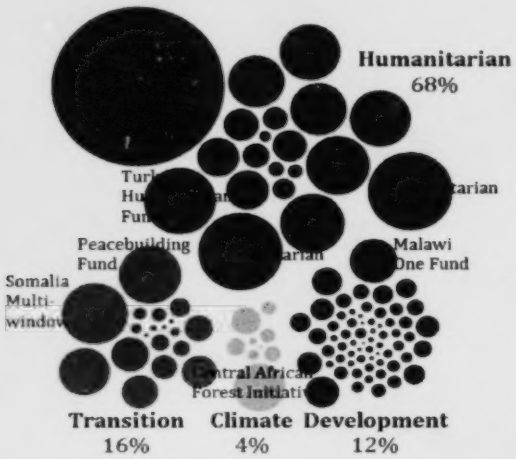


49. Well-designed inter-agency pooled funds, which attract a significant volume of resources, can counteract some of the less positive effects of tightly earmarked non-core contributions. However, there is a risk of high transaction costs related to coordination and reporting if these funds are poorly capitalized. If there are too many such funds and they do not attract resources to generate adequate economies of scale, these funds can actually contribute to decreased efficiency and further fragmentation of resources, defeating one of their primary purposes.

50. In this context, **the $1.7 billion in contributions in 2016 was distributed across 112 different inter-agency pooled funds**. The four largest funds accounted for over 40 per cent of the total volume of flows to inter-agency pooled funds. On the other end of the scale, 62 funds accounted for just 5 per cent of contributions, or an average of $1.4 million each. Of these relatively small funds, 41 were joint programmes, which tend to have a more narrow scope than other types of inter-agency pooled funds.

51. Figure XIII shows the relative contributions to the 112 inter-agency pooled funds in 2016, grouped by theme. Over half of these funds have a development focus, which together attracted $168 million in resources, or 12 per cent of the total flows to inter-agency pooled funds. On the other hand, 21 humanitarian funds attracted more than $1.1 billion in resources in 2016. Transition funds, which include the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund as well as other recovery and post-conflict funds, accounted for 16 per cent of all contributions made to inter-agency pooled funds in 2016.

Figure XIII
Contributions to inter-agency pooled funds, by theme, 2016



Source: United Nations database on inter-agency pooled funds.

52. The fact that development-focused pooled funds are relatively small is associated with a number of factors. Firstly, "One United Nations" funds, which were established to support system-wide coherence and coordination at the country-level by filling funding gaps in "One United Nations" programmes, have not been scaled-up. Secondly, the majority of development-related pooled funds are joint programmes, which have a more limited programmatic scope compared with "One United Nations" funds or many of the humanitarian pooled funds. Thirdly, in 2016 the United Nations did not have a large global pooled fund on the development side, as the development equivalent of the Central Emergency Response Fund.

Entity-specific thematic funds

53. Another mechanism for pooling of funding used by the United Nations development system is the agency-specific thematic fund, which receives contributions softly earmarked to outcome levels of an entity's strategic plan. This type of funding allows for multi-year spending in support of improved planning and sustainability.

54. Contributions through thematic funds have declined in recent years. A total of **$407 million was provided to United Nations thematic funds in 2016 compared with $726 million in 2014**. This significant drop is concerning, as it negatively affects the availability of flexible non-core resources for development-related United Nations activities.

Joint programmes

55. Joint programmes support a common goal across two or more United Nations entities and include a joint budget.

56. In countries that have at least one United Nations joint programme, 85 per cent of respondents to the survey of Governments indicated that these programmes have

promoted greater coherence, 79 per cent said they led to greater effectiveness, while 70 per cent noted that they led to greater efficiency.

57. In 2016, there were on average 2.8 joint programmes per country team and 79 per cent of country teams had at least one joint programme, according to the UNDG information management system. The **joint programmes are concentrated on a small number of** Sustainable Development Goals. For instance, 109 joint programmes target Goal 4 on gender equality and 1 joint programme targets Goal 14 on oceans. Noting that a single joint programme can target multiple Goals, table 3 shows the goals that are targeted by the most and the fewest United Nations joint programmes. An increase in the number of joint programmes is not a significant measure of progress as they are cumulative (i.e. some may have started several years earlier and may have very little expenditure at this point in time). Rather, the amount of annual expenditures deployed through that modality would better capture the extent of joint work. This information, however, is currently not collected and therefore cannot be reported on meaningfully.

Table 3
Number and percentage of joint programmes targeting Sustainable Development Goals

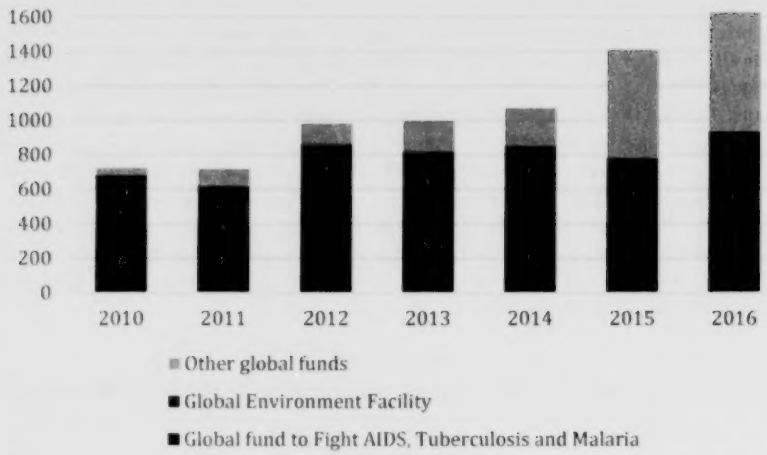
	Joint programmes			*Joint programmes*	
Sustainable Development Goal	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Sustainable Development Goal*	*Number*	*Percentage*
Goal 4, Gender equality	109	29.4	Goal 14, Life below water	1	0.3
Goal 3, Good health and well-being	95	25.6	Goal 7, Affordable and clean energy	11	3.0
Goal 16, Peace, justice and strong institutions	94	25.3	Goal 12, Responsible consumption and production	11	3.0
Goal 8, Decent work and economic growth	76	20.5	Goal 9, Industry, innovation and infrastructure	12	3.2
Goal 2, Zero hunger	63	17.0	Goal 17, Partnership for the Goals	15	4.0

Global vertical funds

58. Over the past decade, global vertical funds have become a significant resource channel to the United Nations development system. These funds focus "vertically" on specific issues or themes just like global United Nations multi-donor trust funds, but are not directly administered by a United Nations entity and do not demand a United Nations lead role in the fund allocation process. Thus, while global funds are a form of pooled funding, from the perspective of the United Nations the funds are often tightly earmarked to particular projects, with the role of the United Nations solely as an implementing organization. Global vertical funds also tend to have a thematic focus and, therefore, focus on a smaller number of Sustainable Development Goals.

59. **An estimated $1.63 billion, or 7 per cent, of all non-core contributions in 2016 were channelled through global funds** (see figure XIV). About 57 per cent of this amount came from either the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria or the Global Environment Facility. Contributions received through global funds have more than doubled since 2010.

Figure XIV
Funding from global vertical funds, 2010–2016



1. Cost recovery

60. Resolution 71/243 reiterated the importance for United Nations entities to achieve full cost recovery, that is, to avoid subsidizing non-core funded projects through core resources, as this reduces the amount of core resources available for programming.

61. The 2017 headquarters survey revealed that all except two United Nations entities[13] have adopted a cost-recovery framework aimed at collecting back the costs of non-core projects that are financed by core resources. The two exceptions indicated that steps were being taken in this regard.

62. As part of the headquarters survey, entities were also asked to present a breakdown of their expenditures in 2016 between what they classify as programme and non-programme expenses. This exercise aims to see whether entities' efforts in recent years have resulted in progress towards achieving full cost recovery. Table 4 contains the cumulative data collected from 16 entities[14] that represent some 70 per cent of total funding for operational activities for development.

63. **The analysis reveals that a higher proportion of core resources are used to finance non-programme costs as compared with non-core resources**. Specifically, 65 per cent of core resources were spent on programme activities in 2016 compared with 89 per cent of non-core resources spent on programme activities. Overall, 84 per cent of funding is spent on programme activities.

[13] Although they are not exempt from the cost-recovery mandate, this survey question excludes Secretariat departments since their cost-recovery policies are defined centrally and approved by the General Assembly for the entire Secretariat.

[14] UNDP (including the Capital Development Fund and UNV), UNFPA, UNICEF, UNOPS, UN-Women, WFP, UNRWA, UN-Habitat, UNAIDS, ITC, FAO, ILO, UNESCO, ECE, ESCAP and UNISDR.

Table 4
Breakdown of funding flows for 16 entities, 2016

(Millions of United States dollars)

Type of funding flow	*Programme activities*	*Programme support and management activities*	*Other (not elsewhere classified)*	*Total*
Core resources	3 248	1 450	324	5 022
Share (percentage)	64.7	28.9	6.5	100
Non-core resources	14 310	1 343	357	16 010
Share (percentage)	89.4	8.4	2.2	100
Total resources	17 557	2 794	681	21 032
Share (percentage)	83.5	13.3	3.2	100

64. There are several factors that cause full cost recovery to remain unachieved even though most United Nations entities have adopted a cost-recovery framework.

65. Firstly, not all types of non-programme costs are subject to cost recovery. For example, in the harmonized framework for UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN-Women, functions mandated to benefit the broader United Nations development system and those related to establishing and implementing norms and standards across the entities' programmatic and institutional areas of work were excluded from cost recovery and thereby funded entirely from core resources.

66. Secondly, waivers are granted for some contributions, meaning that the donor does not have to comply with the regular cost-recovery rate (e.g. contributions made to the law and order trust fund for Afghanistan).

67. Thirdly, discounted cost-recovery rates are charged to certain types of non-core funding, such as contributions to government cost-sharing activities or to loosely earmarked thematic funds. Applying reduced cost-recovery rates can give donors an incentive to provide certain types of contributions over others. While the logic behind these reduced rates seems sensible, it nonetheless leads to additional core resources subsidizing non-core financed projects unless there is a corresponding increase in the basic cost-recovery rate applied to other types of non-core contributions.

68. These factors can lead to an effective cost-recovery rate that is lower than the agreed rate. For instance, in 2013 the Executive Boards of UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and UN-Women endorsed a general harmonized cost-recovery rate of 8 per cent for non-core contributions. Table 5 shows that between 2014 and 2016, the effective rates were consistently lower than 8 per cent, leading to a lower level of recovered costs which would have gone to supplement the core budget of these entities.

Table 5
Effective cost-recovery rates, 2014–2016

Entity	*2014 (percentage)*	*2015 (percentage)*	*2016 (percentage)*	*Variance versus standard 8 per cent rate (millions of United States dollars)*
UNDP	6.1	6.3	6.4	167.2
UNFPA	7.1	7.1	7.3	12.1
UNICEF	6.3	6.5	6.7	155.1
UN-Women	7.1	7.0	7.1	4.5

Note: The variance from the standard rate represents the difference between the effective cost-recovery amount received and the cost-recovery amount that would have been earned using the approved rate of 8 per cent.

69. A key obstacle to achieving full cost recovery appears to be the existence of an inherent conflict between the desire to avoid cross-subsidization to meet the requirements of Member States and the need to remain competitive with donors to attract voluntary funding. This further provides evidence of the need for the United Nations development system to better demonstrate its unique advantages and its value for money and to strengthen accountability through transparent reporting.

C. Allocation of funds

1. General distribution of funds in 2016

70. **In 2016, total expenditures on United Nations operational activities for development amounted to $30.4 billion, of which $22.2 billion, or 73 per cent, was used for programme activities at the country level**, and 27 per cent was related to (or classified as): (a) programme activities at the regional and global levels; (b) programme support and management/administration; and (c) activities not attributed to any of the other categories.

71. About 44 per cent of United Nations expenditures at the country level ($9.8 billion) was made in Africa (see figure XV). Western Asia is in second place in terms of expenditures, with 25 per cent of the share; five years earlier, in 2011, countries in Western Asia accounted for just 8 per cent of United Nations country-level expenditures. In absolute terms, United Nations expenditure in Africa has continued to steadily increase from $8.5 billion in 2011 to $9.8 billion in 2016, despite the significant increase in expenditures in Western Asia.

Figure XV
Distribution of expenditures on United Nations operational activities for development, 2016

Note: The boundaries shown do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

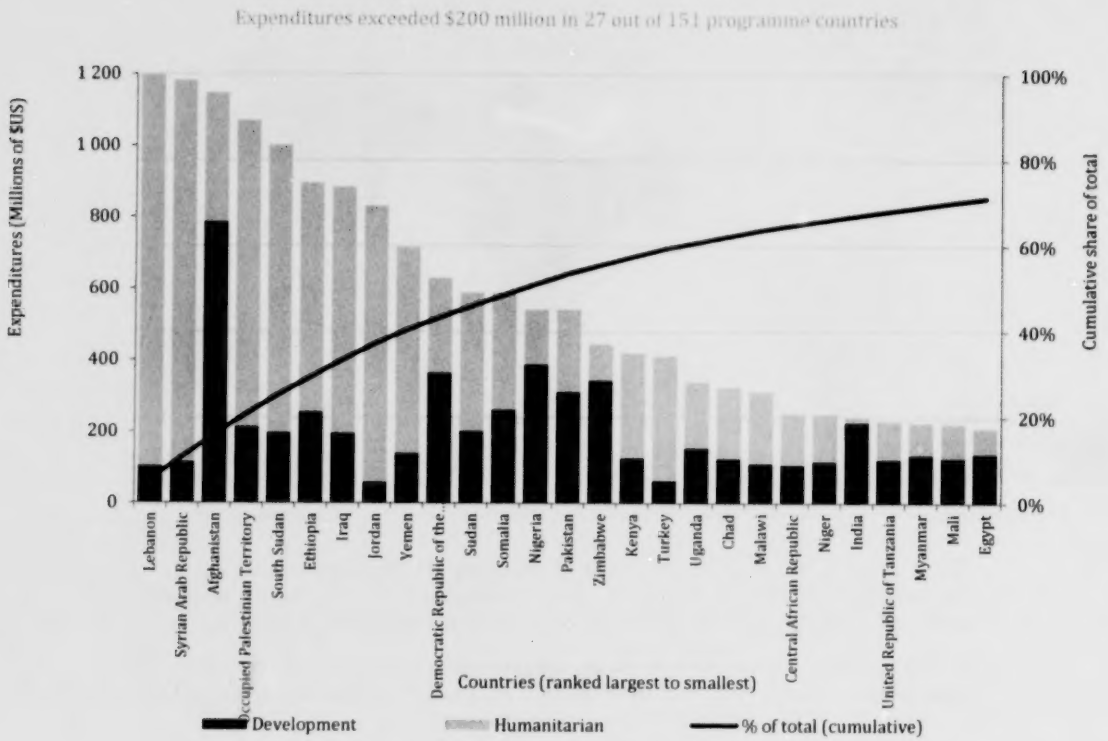
72. Figures XVI (a), XVI (b) and XVI (c) show the distribution and degree of concentration of 2016 country-level expenditures in the 151 programme countries, separated into large, medium and small programme expenditures, respectively.

73. Regarding countries with large programme expenditures, there were 27 programme countries with over $200 million expenditure. Together, these countries accounted for 71 per cent of total country-level expenditures.

74. Figure XVI (a) shows that humanitarian assistance dominated the activities in eight of the nine largest programme countries (Afghanistan, the third-largest programme country, being the exception). These eight countries accounted for 58 per cent of all humanitarian expenditure at the country level.

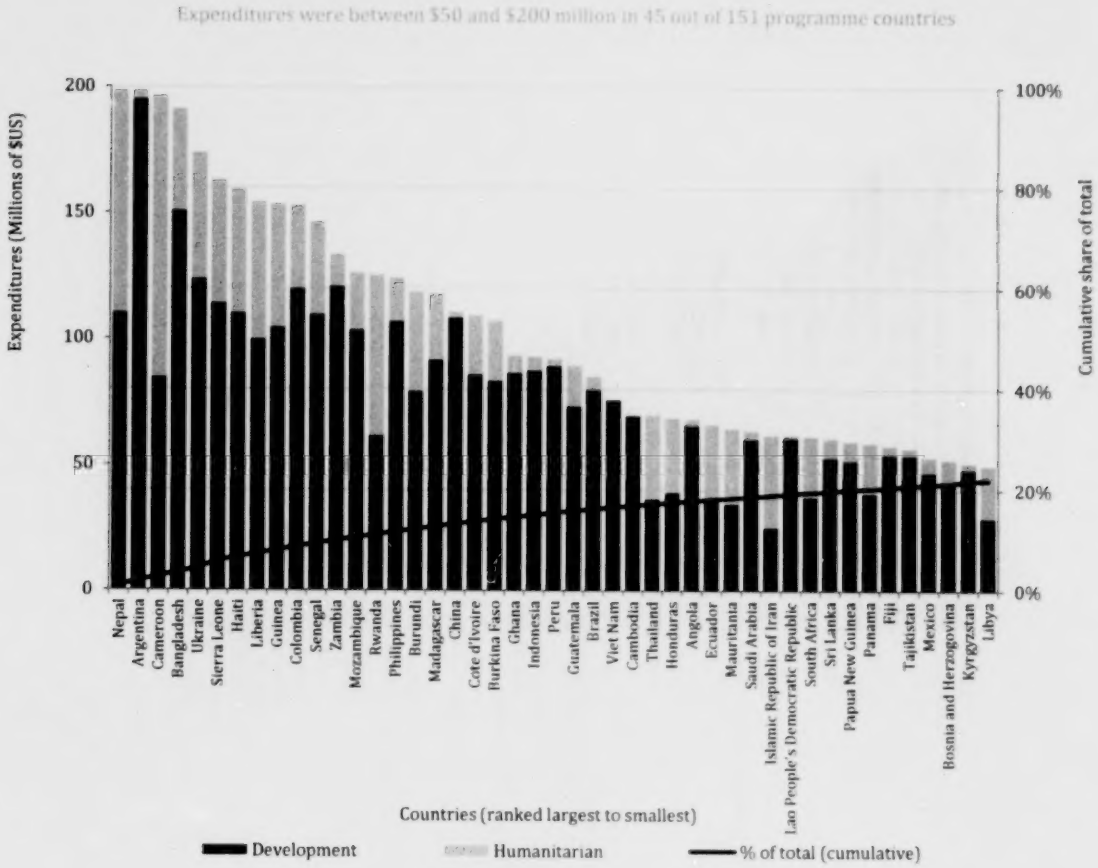
Figure XVI
Expenditures in countries, by size of expenditures

(a) Countries with large expenditures (over $200 million), 2016



75. Figure XVI (b) shows the 45 programme countries that had between $50 and $200 million in expenditures in 2016. In contrast to countries with large expenditures, there were more expenditures on development-related activities than humanitarian-related activities in all except three of the medium-expenditure programme countries.

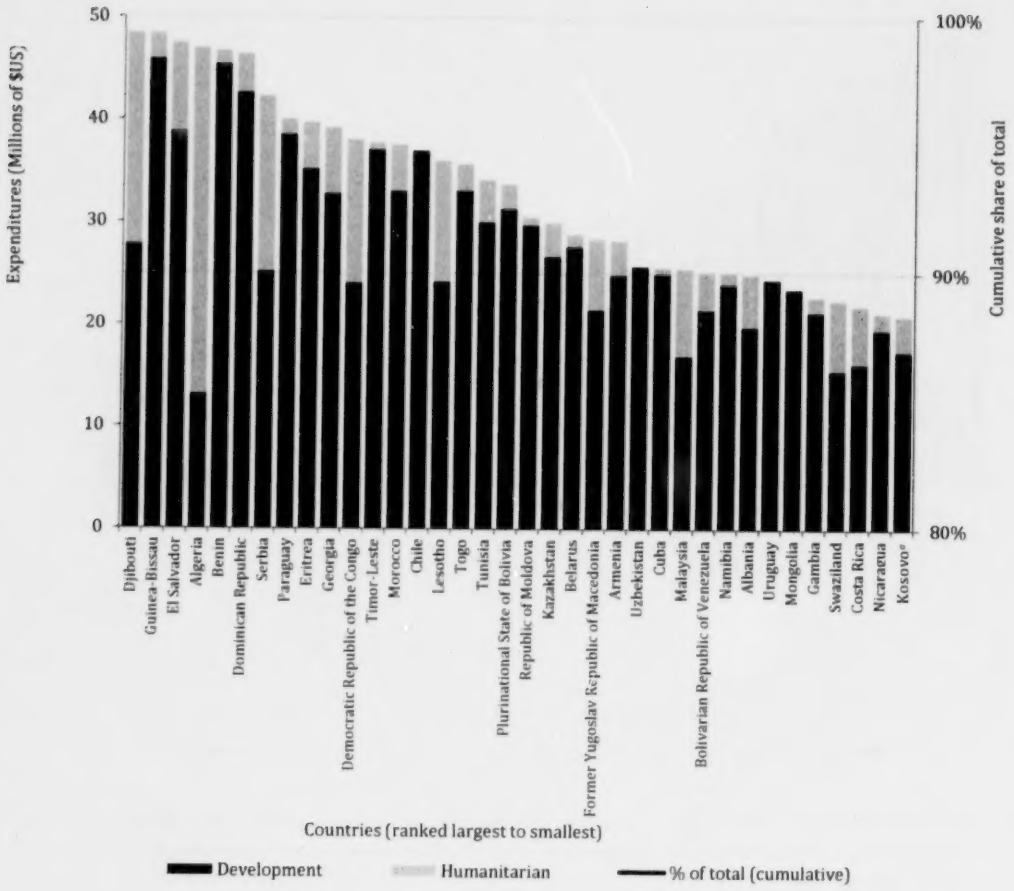
(b) Countries with medium expenditures (between $50 million and $200 million), 2016

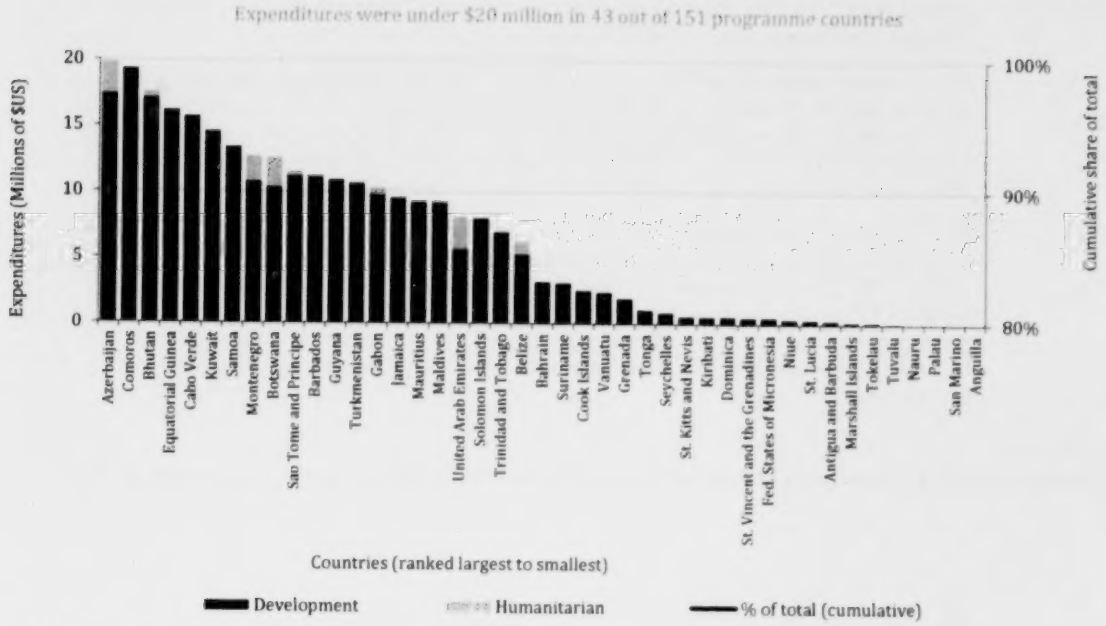


76. Lastly, figure XVI (c) shows the 79 programme countries that had under $50 million in country-level expenditures in 2016. This includes 43 countries with under $20 million in expenditure, which together accounted for 1.3 per cent of total expenditures.

(c) Countries with small expenditures (under $50 million), 2016

Expenditures were between $20 and $50 million in 36 out of 151 programme countries





[e] In the context of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

2. Fragmentation of resources

77. In his July 2017 report on repositioning the United Nations development system (A/72/124-E/2018/3, para. 112), the Secretary-General highlighted that fragmentation and volatility are the norm and that an effective repositioning of the development system will depend, to a significant extent, on changes to current funding practices.

78. Figure XVI shows that 71 per cent of country-level expenditures are concentrated in 27 countries, with an average expenditure of $34 million per entity, per country. Furthermore, in 79 programme countries, expenditures are below $50 million. Of these, 57 countries have a resident coordinator and a United Nations country team,[15] an average of between 9 and 10 entities physically present[16] and expenditures of $2.7 million per entity per country.

79. The combination of many entities with limited amounts of resources in more than half of all programme countries along with the fact that most of these resources are restrictively earmarked shines a light on the urgency to address the fragmentation of funding.

80. The low predictability and donor-driven aspects of tightly earmarked funding make it difficult to plan and allocate resources strategically in order to strengthen coordination and coherence of activities on the ground. This is particularly concerning in the era of the Sustainable Development Goals, where the integrated nature of the

[15] The other 22 programme countries are represented by a resident coordinator in a multi-country office.

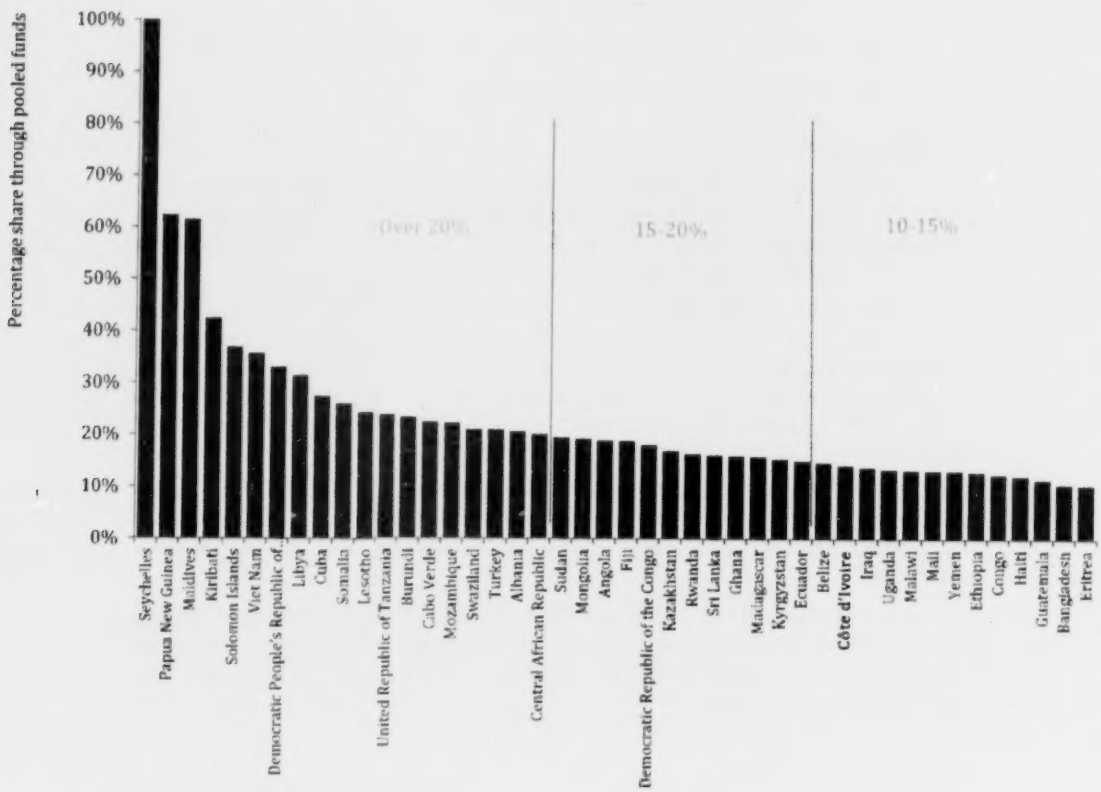
[16] These countries also have, on average, 4.5 non-resident entities that are members of the United Nations country team.

2030 Agenda calls for flexible funding that facilitates partnerships and enables a strategic deployment of resources across programmes.

81. A combination of scaling-up some of the existing funding mechanisms and creating new initiatives could be considered to alleviate some of this fragmentation. The Secretary-General is identifying mechanisms — pooled funds or other innovative funding sources — to do so. The proposed funding compact is also aimed at improving the quantity of high quality, less earmarked non-core resources.

82. At least 15 per cent of non-core expenditures should be channelled through inter-agency pooled funds to reap the benefits of economies of scale, as estimated by UNDG.[17] In 2016, 31 programme countries reached the 15 per cent threshold (see figure XVII). This marks a notable improvement compared with 2015, when the threshold was reached for just 22 countries. In over two thirds of programme countries, less than 5 per cent of non-core expenditures were channelled through inter-agency pooled funds.

Figure XVII
Countries with over 10 per cent of expenditures channelled through inter-agency pooled funds, 2016



[17] UNDG discussion paper on the role of United Nations pooled financing mechanisms to deliver the 2030 Agenda (endorsed by the Group on 28 March 2016).

New pooled funding initiatives

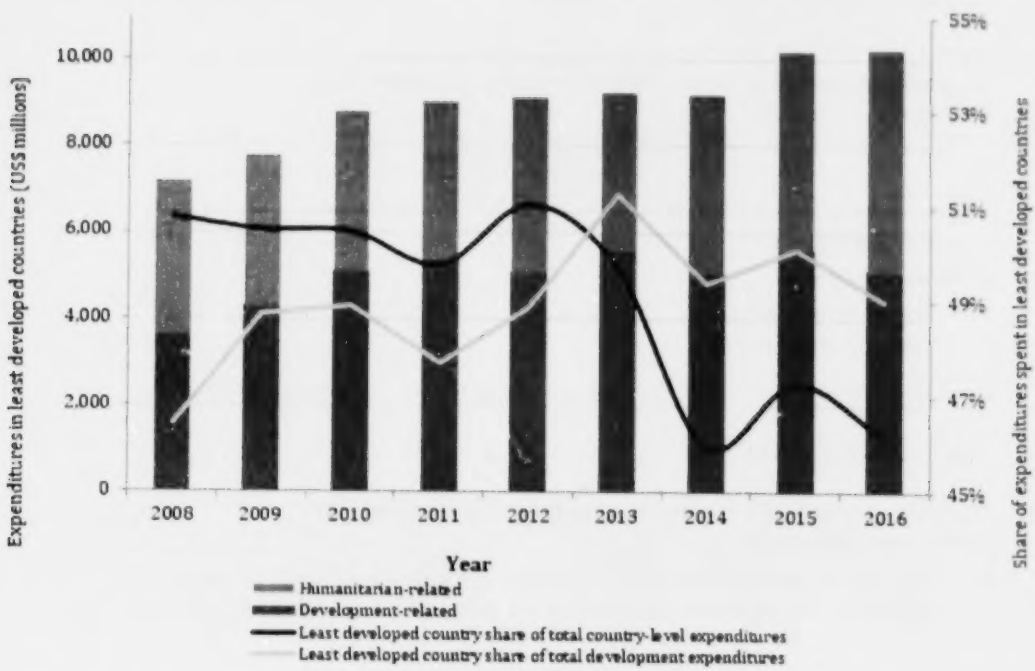
83. The nature of the 2030 Agenda requires more than ever that the funding for United Nations operational activities for development enables collective results at the country level as well as integrated approaches across multiple sectors and goals. This has resulted in new initiatives based on pooled funds.

84. In 2017, UNDG completed the design of a joint fund for the 2030 Agenda which aims to provide catalytic grants for country teams, together with partners, to unblock key bottlenecks and enhance whole-of-government approaches for coherent national policies on the Sustainable Development Goals. In addition, the United Nations, together with the European Union, launched the global Spotlight Initiative, an inter-agency pooled fund focused on eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls. It is expected that an initial investment of €500 million will be made, with the European Union as the main contributor.

3. Distribution of expenditures by country group

85. **Expenditures in the least developed countries totalled $10.3 billion in 2016, which represents 46 per cent of total expenditures at the country level**. Until 2014, this share had been at over 50 per cent, as shown in figure XVIII. The decline in the share is largely attributed to increasing humanitarian expenditures in middle-income countries resulting from the crises in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic. Out of total development-related expenditures, 49 per cent were in least developed countries in 2016.

Figure XVIII
Expenditures in least developed countries, 2008–2016



86. The average United Nations expenditure in the 47 least developed countries was $218 million in 2016. Table 6 provides an overview of how expenditures were distributed among different country groupings. The 32 landlocked developing countries received the highest expenditures per capita.

Table 6
Expenditures by country group
(United States dollars)

Country group	*Number of countries*	*Share of total country-level expenditure (percentage)*	*Average expenditure per country (million)*	*Expenditure per capita*
Least developed countries	47	46.2	218.3	12.03
Middle-income countries	110	59.7	120.7	2.52
Small island developing States	58	2.6	11.5	9.66
Landlocked developing countries	32	28.8	200.1	14.74
Africa	57	44.2	172.5	9.41

Note: Country groups are not mutually exclusive.

87. Table 7 presents an overview and the number of entities physically present in different country groups. The average United Nations operational activities for development expenditure per entity varies considerably across the different country groups, from $18 million in the least developed countries to $1.3 million in small island developing States. Section III.D below provides further analysis on United Nations assistance by different country groups.

Table 7
Expenditures and physical presence across country groups, 2016
(Millions of United States dollars)

Country group	*Average number of resident United Nations entities per country*	*Average expenditure per entity per country*
Least developed countries	12.1	18.0
Middle-income countries	10.7	11.3
Small island developing States	8.7	1.3
Landlocked developing countries	12.1	16.5
Africa	11.9	14.5

D. Select funding issues

1. Increasing the impact of United Nations operational activities for development resources

88. Discussions at the global level have stressed that financing needs for meeting the Sustainable Development Goals are in the order of $5 trillion to $7 trillion

yearly.[18] While small in volume compared with these requirements, the funding channelled through the United Nations development system can have a significant impact, as these flows tend to be more targeted to development objectives and to direct aid to the poorest and most vulnerable than other resources flowing to and within developing countries. Furthermore, the system can use its funding as a catalyst towards additional resources, including national resources.

89. Fulfilling this potential requires a shift in mindset and approaches to country-level programming by United Nations country teams, in close collaboration with national Governments, as well as new skill sets and capacities for the United Nations development system, including country teams. With the development landscape becoming increasingly complex, national coordination of resources at the country level must improve significantly. The system has a key role to play in supporting the efforts of Member States in this regard, by undertaking development finance assessments that comprehensively scan a country's financing landscape, both financial flows and policies. Such assessments can serve as a baseline for integrated national financing frameworks that take into consideration all funding sources and policies that support the broader sustainable development strategy of the country, as called for in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the quadrennial comprehensive policy review.

90. United Nations country teams can also support Governments with information on how to direct more financial flows towards national development priorities anchored in the Sustainable Development Goals. While the United Nations is not a financing institution, it can support Governments by identifying potential entry points and sources to leverage larger financing flows, in collaboration with different partners and actors, to support the implementation of national plans.

91. As the United Nations development system engages in innovative efforts aimed at raising additional resources, it should develop ways that accurately measure the amount of resources it is able to leverage in support of the Sustainable Development Goals, beyond just the funding that is channelled through the system. Entities would thus be able to share knowledge and best practices on innovative practices that succeeded, as well as those that did not.

92. As domestic public resources are the largest source of financing in most developing countries, their mobilization and effective use will be critical to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The Platform for Collaboration on Tax (a joint initiative of the United Nations, IMF, OECD and the World Bank Group) was recently established to strengthen tax capacities in developing countries and provide joint guidance on a range of tax issues so that Governments can better address the tax challenges they face. This includes helping developing countries to reduce the amount of money that they lose through illicit financial flows and to raise domestic resources in fair and effective ways. This is one of the many areas that can help in increasing the flow of financing, including through more domestic investment.

2. Progress in strengthening transparency and accountability of funding

93. The high proportion of earmarked funding to the United Nations development system is partly a by-product of the funding patterns established during the era of the Millennium Development Goals. Earmarking resources can also be an attractive

[18] UNCTAD, *World Investment Report 2014: Investing in the Sustainable Development Goals* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.14.II.D.1).

option to donors as it can offer them more oversight and visibility over how their aid money is being spent, helping to justify aid spending to their constituency.

94. Nevertheless, the decline in the core resources share of funding also points to other issues, ranging from changes in the development landscape with the rise of many new development actors, to the emphasis on value for money and the impact of interventions. Reversing the decline in core funding requires significant efforts, including moving towards a whole-of-system approach that targets collective results, measures to improve effectiveness and efficiencies in terms of presence and operations, and increased transparency and accountability of the system.

95. A key element for this objective is reinforcing transparency at entity- and system-wide levels, on budgets, expenditures and results, including through accurate and comprehensive financial reporting to CEB as well as through enrolment in the International Aid Transparency Initiative.

96. Currently, 14 entities of the United Nations development system[19] are providing information through the International Aid Transparency Initiative organization standard, and the Secretary-General has recently called for reinforced transparency on entity-specific expenditures and results through system-wide enrolment into the Initiative (A/72/124-E/2018/3, para. 108 (b)). A study by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU/REP/2017/2) indicates that several large government contributors are starting to make compliance with the Initiative a prerequisite for their continued funding.

97. One of the benefits of the International Aid Transparency Initiative is that it can serve as an enabler for other data visualization platforms that help to ensure that Member States (and other stakeholders) have a clear picture of where and how the United Nations development system is spending its resources and for what purposes. DOCO, with support from UNDP in its capacity as the secretariat of the Initiative, managed the development of UNDG's first open data platform (www.open.undg.org). The platform promotes a common approach to the application of transparency standards by consolidating in one place and in real time, the financial and activity data of all 14 United Nations entities currently publishing data in accordance with the Initiative standard. The number of United Nations activities published in the standard reached 39,000 in 2016, an increase of 50 per cent compared with 2014.

98. The UNDG data portal complements entity-specific ones that were developed in recent years to present details of an entity's activities and financing in a timely and user-friendly manner. The Joint Inspection Unit study, however, revealed that a number of donors felt that some reports and data provided by entities lacked robustness and evidence. It is clear that entities need to further improve the monitoring and reporting used to feed information into their data portals, ensuring contributors and recipients receive higher quality data on the results and outcomes achieved, rather than general descriptions of activities and actions.

99. There still remains underreporting of United Nations expenditures at the country level in the financial statistics of CEB, which is the main platform on system-wide funding flows and the basis for the funding analysis in the present report. In 2017, eight entities,[20] which together account for 10 per cent of total expenditures on

[19] Or 15 United Nations entities if the United Nations Capital Development Fund and UNDP are counted separately and 18 entities if the Central Emergency Response Fund, the World Bank and the International Drug Purchase Facility are also counted (however these entities are not among those listed in box 1).

[20] IFAD, ITC, UNEP, UNITAR, UNESCO, UNODC, UNWTO and PAHO (WHO Regional Office for the Americas).

operational activities for development, did not report to CEB on their country-level expenditures. This represents a modest improvement compared with 2016, when 12 entities accounting for 11 per cent of expenditures did not report a country-level breakdown of expenditures to CEB.

100. The mapping exercise on the functions and capacities of the United Nations development system commissioned by the Secretary-General in response to the mandate of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review revealed similar weaknesses, including a lack of granular information from many United Nations entities on the use and geographical allocation of their expenditures. A number of measures are required to improve data, and these are expected to be launched in 2018 as a result of the repositioning exercise.

101. An ad hoc United Nations inter-agency team co-chaired by CEB and the UNDP Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office began work in late 2017 to improve reporting at the entity level to CEB and through the International Aid Transparency Initiative standard, making the information more complete and accurate to meet current information needs. This was in response to the need for more granular information on the allocation of resources by entities and to the quadrennial review mandate to continue to strengthen the analytical quality of system-wide reporting on funding, performance and programme results for United Nations operational activities for development. The team will work on defining the specific actions to be undertaken to produce financial data on funding flows across five dimensions: (a) the United Nations entity; (b) the function provided; (c) the geographic location; (d) the financing instrument used; and (e) the targeted integrated set of Sustainable Development Goals and targets.

Integrated results and resources framework

102. At the headquarters level, integrated results and resources frameworks are intended to hold entities accountable for the funding entrusted to them by linking the resources of entities to strategic plan results. Out of 29 United Nations entities responding to the headquarters survey, 27 indicated that all projected resources of their organization were consolidated within an integrated results and resources framework based on priorities determined in the respective strategic plan. The other two entities indicated that this will be done starting in 2018.

103. Feedback received through the headquarters survey shows that nearly every entity is implementing an integrated results and resources framework. It also revealed, however, that actual contributions regularly fall short of the estimates provided in the approved framework. One large entity indicated that it presents aspirational rather than realistic estimates in the framework, thus also ensuring that its budgets would not be exceeded. Such practices should be avoided as they reduce transparency and accountability.

Common budgetary framework

104. At the country level, the common budgetary framework is an integral part of UNDAF (or similar planning instrument) and enables United Nations country teams to present all planned and costed United Nations programme activities in one place, in support of a better coordinated delivery by country teams. An annual common budgetary framework is an annualized version of the medium-term common budgetary framework and provides a more realistic projection of financial needs, funding availability and funding gaps.

105. As called for in the quadrennial review, a medium-term common budgetary framework in every programme country should be viewed as a minimum requirement. According to the UNDG information management system, 59 per cent of United Nations country teams currently have a medium-term common budgetary framework, while 30 per cent of them have an annual common budgetary framework, indicating that there is still significant room for improvement. The new open data platform developed by UNDG will begin digitizing UNDAFs and their associated common budgetary frameworks beginning in 2018, which could make these frameworks more streamlined and transparent.

106. The proposed system-wide strategic document (A/72/684-E/2018/7, annex) may help in addressing some of the aforementioned issues.

IV. Enabling programme countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals

107. The primary role of the United Nations development system is to support Governments to achieve the 2030 Agenda, of which poverty eradication is the overarching objective. To that end, in resolution 71/243 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, the General Assembly calls on the system to perform some critical functions, including integrated policy and normative support, capacity development, leveraging partnerships and supporting South-South and triangular cooperation. The quadrennial review calls for a whole-of-system response based on stronger cross-pillar work, particularly in terms of greater cooperation and complementarity across development, humanitarian and sustaining-peace activities. The Assembly also calls upon all entities of the system to continue to promote women's empowerment and gender equality.

108. **The United Nations remains the Member States' preferred partner of choice to deliver on its key functions.** As table 8 shows, Governments were asked to assess the performance of the United Nations system compared with other development partners, and respondents selected the top two partners that best satisfied their country's needs in terms of select performance factors. The United Nations comes first in each of the seven areas listed in the table, with progress on key functions outlined in the following paragraphs.

Table 8
Countries' preferred providers of external support, by type of support, 2017

Question: Select UP TO TWO partners that you consider to be the preferred provider of each type of support

	United Nations system (agencies, funds and programmes)	*Bretton Woods institutions*	*Other multilateral and regional institutions not part of the United Nations*	*OECD DAC partners*	*Southern partners*	*Thematic or alliance-based partners (e.g. Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria)*
Ranked first ***Ranked second***	*Number of times selected*					
Strengthening national capacities	**74**	**42**	27	19	7	5
Providing evidence-based and, where appropriate, integrated policy advice	**68**	**45**	17	18	8	2

Question: Select UP TO TWO partners that you consider to be the preferred provider of each type of support

	United Nations system (agencies, funds and programmes)	*Bretton Woods institutions*	*Other multilateral and regional institutions not part of the United Nations*	*OECD/DAC partners*	*Southern partners*	*Thematic or alliance-based partners (e.g. Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria)*
Ranked first ***Ranked second***	*Number of times selected*					
Assisting countries through support with norms and standards	**42**	**41**	24	23	10	6
Sectoral programming advice and technical assistance	**65**	**41**	19	18	17	9
Direct support and service delivery	**51**	**38**	16	23	–	–
Peace and security	**67**	6	**28**	17	9	4
Humanitarian assistance	**65**	13	**22**	17	7	11

Source: 2017 survey of programme country Governments.

A. Eradicating poverty and leaving no one behind

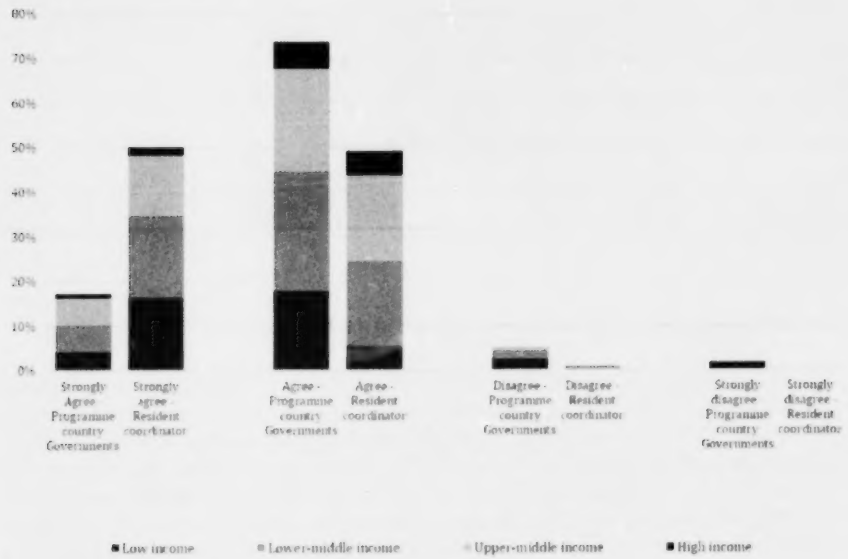
109. As expressed in the 2012 quadrennial comprehensive policy review (General Assembly resolution 67/226) and reaffirmed in the 2016 quadrennial review (resolution 71/243), eradicating poverty is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. Member States recognize poverty eradication as the top priority and objective of United Nations operational activities for development, and that no one should be left behind. Reaching those who are furthest behind first is about prioritizing the dignity of human beings and ensuring that every individual has the opportunity to realize the rights underpinning the Sustainable Development Goals.

110. Many United Nations entities consider the overarching principle of poverty eradication and the pledge to reach those furthest behind first in the 2030 Agenda as already within the scope of their entity's mandate, and have not articulated any new policies in this regard. Entities without explicit mandates on poverty eradication, such as OHCHR, UNHCR and UNISDR, are responding by applying the principle of leaving no one behind in ways that are relevant to their mandates.

111. The 2015 and 2017 surveys by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs asked both Governments and resident coordinators the extent to which they agreed that the United Nations ensures adequate attention and resources are given to the development needs of the poorest and most vulnerable segments of society. As shown in figure XIX, resident coordinators were far more likely to "strongly agree" with this statement than Governments.

Figure XIX
Ensuring focus towards the most vulnerable

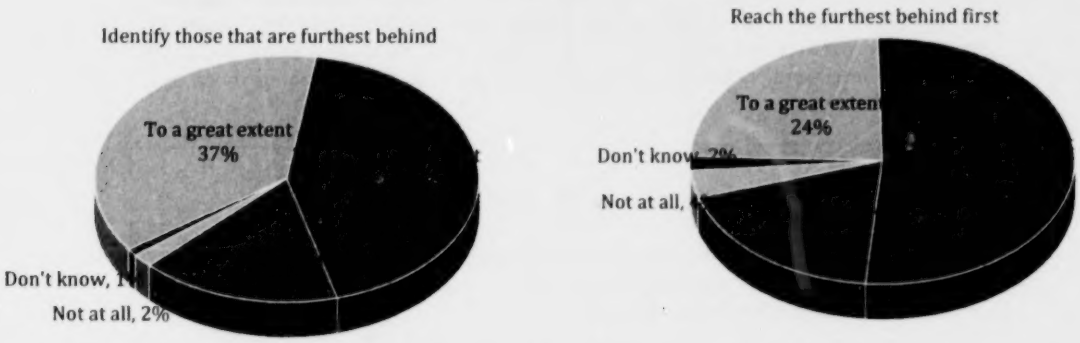
Question: The United Nations ensures adequate attention and resources are given to the development needs of the poorest and most vulnerable segments of society:



Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of programme countries and survey of resident coordinators.

112. **Evidence suggests that the United Nations is successful in assisting Governments to identify the furthest behind, and to a lesser degree in helping Governments to actually reach this population with material support or programmatic interventions** (see figure XX). While 37 per cent of Governments indicated that the United Nations system supports them to identify those farthest behind "to a great extent", only 24 per cent reported that the system is effective "to a great extent" in reaching them. Commenting on why this is the case, some Governments indicated that the United Nations is unable to reach the furthest behind owing to scarcity of resources or because they failed to consult with grass-roots civil society groups. One responding Government with a large humanitarian crisis explained that the United Nations was not reaching the poorest populations in more peaceful parts of the country because it was devoting the majority of its resources to stabilizing conflict zones. Another Government reported that it was not able to assess the performance of the United Nations in this area because the country team did not share their budgets or operational expenditures.

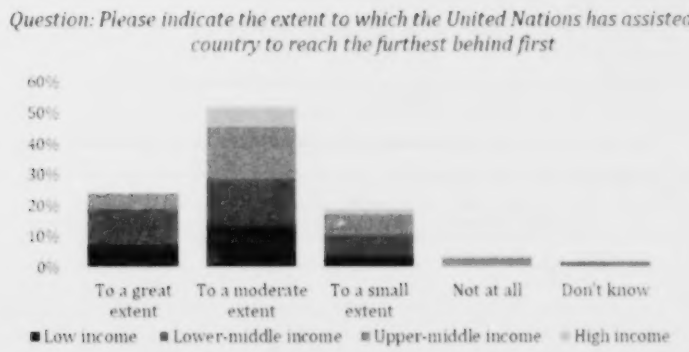
Figure XX
United Nations support in identifying and reaching those furthest behind



Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of programme country Governments.

113. **Low-income countries are more likely to respond that the United Nations system assisted in reaching the furthest behind first "to a great extent" than countries with higher incomes** (see figure XXI). Around a quarter of all countries replied "to a small extent", "not at all" or "don't know" on these questions. However, this share falls notably in the group of countries which are further advanced in implementation of standard operating procedures, possibly indicating that integrated ways of working do support Governments to reach those furthest behind.

Figure XXI
United Nations support to reaching those furthest behind, by income group



Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of programme country Governments.

114. **In the survey, 86 per cent of resident coordinators agreed that the UNDAF or its equivalent framework**[21] **"addresses how the United Nations country team**

[21] For the purposes of the present report, all references to UNDAFs are inclusive of their equivalent frameworks.

will reach the furthest behind first". However, when asked to highlight innovative strategies being used to that effect, the responses were limited to traditional and broad-based actions (see box 2), indicating further thinking is needed to strengthen the system's reach to those left furthest behind. This speaks of the importance to strengthen capacities and skill sets of the system to be fit to deliver on the 2030 Agenda. Furthermore, addressing data gaps will be central to reaching those left behind.

Box 2
Innovative strategies to reach those furthest behind

Resident coordinators were invited to highlight any innovative strategies in the UNDAF that the United Nations country team is pursuing in order to reach the furthest behind first. Responses included:

- Enhancing community involvement in the definition of target groups
- Focusing on the poorest regions of a country
- "Social inclusion" being an important theme of the UNDAF
- Improving data collection to plan and measure progress
- Improving public access to such data
- Taking a human-rights based approach
- Conducting a public perception survey around the Sustainable Development Goals
- Establishing a United Nations office in the most disadvantaged region
- Addressing youth unemployment
- Including a specific UNDAF outcome focusing on indigenous people, women and youth
- Focusing on ethnic minorities
- Involving a very wide range of stakeholders in the common country analysis
- Undertaking vulnerability assessments
- Strengthening linkages between development and humanitarian actions

115. The survey of programme country Governments asked respondents to select the five most important areas, organized by the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, where: (a) the United Nations contribution over the past two years had been especially significant; and (b) United Nations assistance will be required over the next four years. Analysis of the data by income grouping and country typology is provided in sections III.E and F.

116. **The five goals where the United Nations development system has made the most contributions over the past two years are primarily the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals.** Health is the topmost area according to both the 2015 and the 2017 surveys, followed by food security, nutrition and eradicating hunger; poverty eradication; gender equality; and education, which were also among the top 10 areas in previous surveys. The results are shown in figure XXII.

Figure XXII

Areas where the United Nations contribution has been especially significant (last two years) and where assistance will be needed (next four years)

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of programme country Governments.

117. **Looking forward, in order of priority for United Nations assistance over the next four years, Governments identified poverty (Goal 1), health (Goal 3), productive employment and sustainable economic growth (Goal 8), combating climate change and its impacts (Goal 13), and affordable and clean energy (Goal 7).**

118. Those five goals were not among the most mentioned areas regarding past performance. This suggests that the United Nations system may need to boost its capacities in the areas that go beyond the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals.

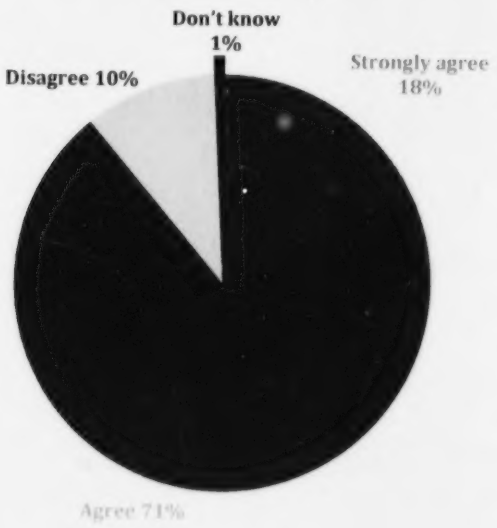
119. No Government selected responsible consumption and production (Goal 12) as an area where the United Nations contribution over the past two years had been especially significant, which may reflect the lack of a natural institutional home for this Goal.

B. Supporting capacity development

120. **Through the quadrennial review, Member States have consistently reaffirmed that capacity development is a core function of the United Nations** (see resolutions 67/226 and 71/243). **Most Governments agree that the United Nations development system has been effective in developing national capacities.** As shown in figure XXIII, 18 per cent of Governments "strongly agree" and 71 per cent "agree" to that statement, which is consistent with results from previous surveys.

Figure XXIII
Effectiveness in building national capacities

Question: All things considered, the United Nations has been effective in developing national capacities:



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2017 survey of programme country Governments.

121. **Support by the United Nations development system to strengthening national capacities is particularly strong in the area of planning, but less so regarding management and evaluation.** As shown in table 9, most Governments agree that the United Nations has contributed overall to strengthening national capacities regarding planning, management, evaluation and statistics. Yet, 20 per cent of Governments disagreed that the system had contributed to strengthening national capacities in management, with the percentages for evaluation and statistics standing at 23 per cent and 11 per cent, respectively.

Table 9
Strengthening national capacities

(Percentage)

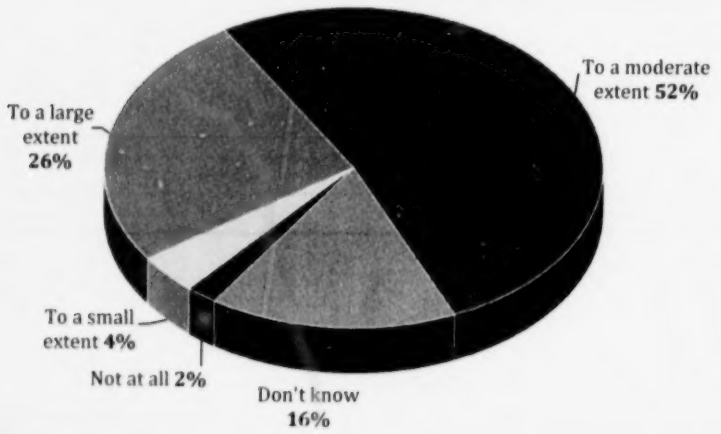
Response to survey question by programme country Governments	*The United Nations has contributed to the strengthening of national capacities in*			
	Planning	*Management*	*Evaluation*	*Statistics*
Strongly agree	17	12	6	13
Agree	72	64	69	67
Disagree	9	20	22	10
Strongly disagree	–	–	1	1
Don't know	3	4	2	9
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of programme country Governments.

122. **The United Nations is viewed by programme countries as both contributing to building national capacities to engage in partnerships and playing a catalytic role to facilitate them** (see figure XXIV). However, countries view the United Nations as more active in directly facilitating partnerships (where 87 per cent of countries agreed to a moderate or large extent) than in building national capacities for partnerships (where 78 per cent agreed), thus possibly indicating the need for strengthened skills sets in United Nations country teams in that regard.

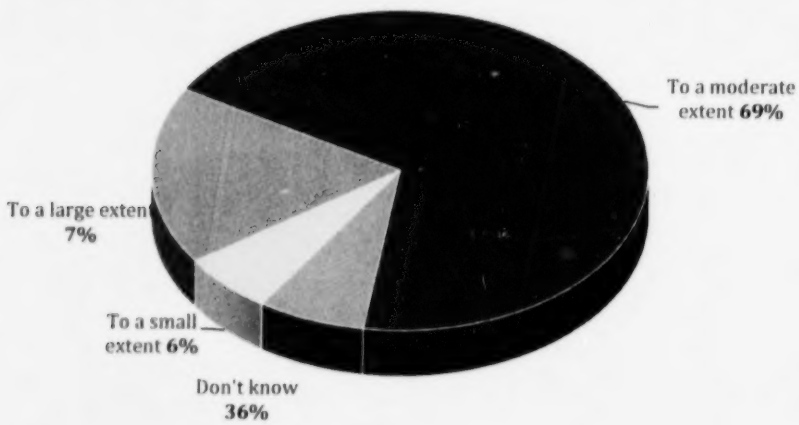
Figure XXIV
United Nations support towards building partnerships

Question: The United Nations has contributed to building the capacity of the country to engage in partnerships



Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of programme country Governments.

Question: The United Nations plays a catalytic role in facilitating partnerships

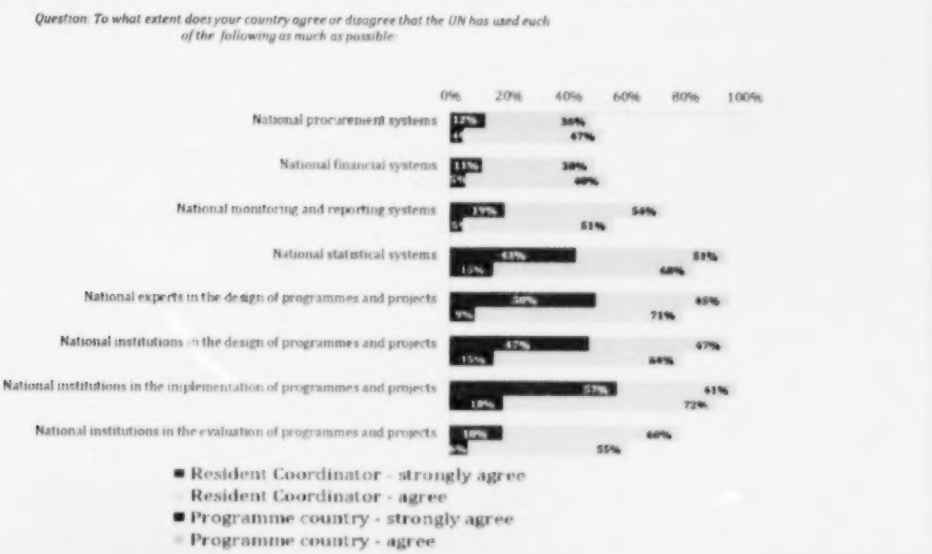


Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of programme country Governments.

Use of national institutions and systems

123. **There is scope for progress on the use of national systems and institutions by the United Nations development system.** Although using national systems and institutions is a key element in bolstering national capacities, it is still not the default approach, where appropriate, of United Nations entities in implementing country-level activities. As illustrated in figure XXV, few Governments "strongly agreed" that the United Nations uses national institutions in the design of programmes and projects as much as possible, compared with nearly half of resident coordinators who "strongly agreed". In other areas such as procurement, financial systems, monitoring and reporting, and with regard to evaluation, there was even less agreement that national capacities were being used as much as possible. Feedback from Governments suggests that using national systems and institutions is a significant aspect of strengthening them. In this regard, the data suggest there is significant scope for improvement across the board.

Figure XXV
Utilization of national systems and institutions by the United Nations development system


Question: To what extent does your country agree or disagree that the UN has used each of the following as much as possible:
0%
20%
40%
60%
80%
100%
National procurement systems
National financial systems
National monitoring and reporting systems
National statistical systems
National experts in the design of programmes and projects
National institutions in the design of programmes and projects
National institutions in the implementation of programmes and projects
National institutions in the evaluation of programmes and projects
Resident Coordinator - strongly agree
Resident Coordinator - agree
Programme country - strongly agree
Programme country - agree

Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2017 survey of programme country Governments and Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2017 survey of resident coordinators.

Coordinated approaches to capacity development

124. **Achieving the 2030 Agenda requires a more systematic, coordinated and comprehensive approach to capacity development.** The quadrennial comprehensive policy review in 2012 called for the development of a United Nations development system joint approach to capacity development, based on common methodology and standards; action on the request remains pending.

125. The findings of two recent studies by the Joint Inspection Unit indicate that a coordinated approach across the United Nations development system on capacity development does not exist. In a study which assessed 36 UNDAF evaluations

conducted between 2009 and 2014 (JIU/REP/2016/6), the Unit found that, despite being a programming principle, **capacity development is seldom mentioned in UNDAF evaluations and is "insufficiently articulated" in UNDAF activities, resulting in a significant programmatic gap**. In a study that was more specifically on strengthening national statistical capacities (JIU/REP/2016/5), the Unit found that there was no overarching plan on the efforts to clarify the respective roles and division of labour among the various United Nations entities.

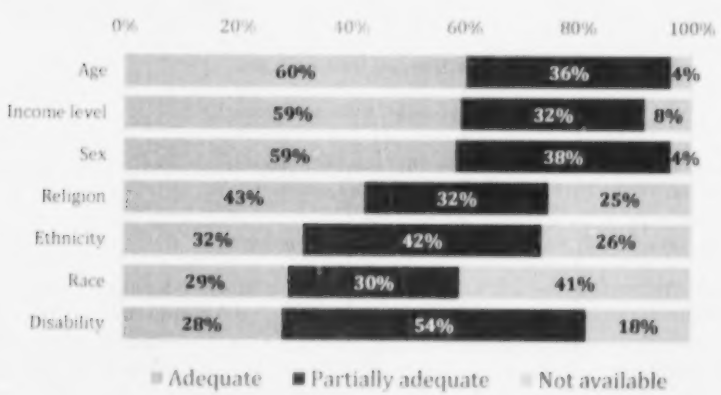
126. To ensure that efforts to develop national capacities are systematic and coordinated, United Nations country teams need to engage in joint analyses and needs assessments. The 2017 UNDAF guidance sets out as a minimum requirement the development of a high-quality, evidence-based common country analysis, part of which includes an assessment of the capacities of Governments and other relevant stakeholders. In the same vein, **Governments see the need for a more thorough analysis of needs, improved coordination among United Nations entities and an approach to national capacity development that is more comprehensive and has strong national ownership**.

127. **In the context of leaving no one behind, a joint approach for capacity-building is vital, especially in terms of data collection and analysis.**

128. **Surveys indicate that data disaggregation around the dimensions of racial diversity, religion and disability remains limited.** As shown in figure XXVI, most resident coordinators find official data disaggregated by income, sex and age to be adequate or partially adequate, while data on persons with disabilities, ethnicity, race and religion less so, and in many countries, unavailable.

Figure XXVI
Degree of access to various categories of official data

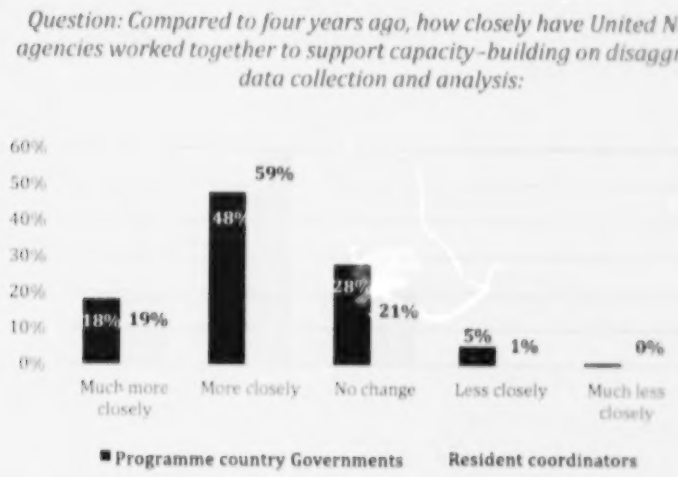
Question: Please indicate whether the United Nations country team has access to official government data on:



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2017 survey of resident coordinators.

129. **While the United Nations has improved in terms of integrated work for capacity-building with regard to data, much more needs to be done on this front.** As shown in figure XXVII, 78 per cent of resident coordinators agree that United Nations entities are working more or much more closely together, compared with four years ago, to support capacity-building on disaggregated data collection and analysis. The share of Governments who agree with this statement remains, however, lower (66 per cent). The fact that 28 per cent of Governments failed to note any change provides further evidence that more remains to be done in many countries.

Figure XXVII
Collaboration in capacity-building around data



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2017 survey of programme country Governments and survey of resident coordinators.

130. **The United Nations development system is improving its own capacity for data literacy, technology, collection and analysis at disaggregated levels, in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals.** A 2017 DOCO desk review of 23 UNDAFs signed between 2015 and 2017, found that **20 UNDAFs planned capacity-development support to national statistics institutions for evidence-based policymaking and programme design**. The study does not indicate whether the capacity-development support indicated in the frameworks was part of a coordinated effort by the county team or an entity-specific activity. In February 2017, UNDG published guidelines to support country reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals. In addition, UNDG joined forces with the Global Pulse initiative and its Privacy Advisory Group to design common principles for data privacy and protection so as to optimize the use of big data towards implementing the 2030 Agenda.

131. In addition, many Governments requested support from the United Nations development system in preparing a voluntary national review. Since 2016,

65 countries have presented such a review. Of these, 40 responded to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs surveys stating they had presented a voluntary national review, among which **35 reported having received United Nations support**.

C. Providing integrated policy advice

132. **The quadrennial comprehensive policy review calls upon the United Nations development system to provide high quality, evidence-based, integrated policy advice.**

133. As illustrated in table 10, while Governments largely agree that United Nations policy advice is evidence-based and tailored to the country's needs and priorities, **there is scope to improve on the policy advice being provided in an integrated fashion where appropriate**.

Table 10
Provision of policy advice
(Percentage)

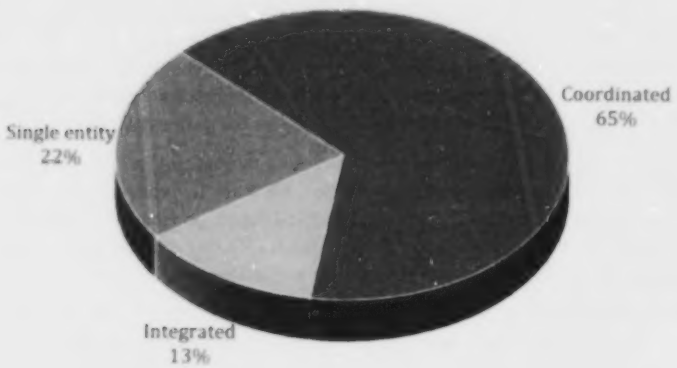
	The United Nations provides policy advice tailored to national needs and priorities, that is:	
Response to survey question by programme country Governments	*Evidence-based*	*Provided jointly*
Strongly agree	25	17
Agree	68	63
Disagree	2	10
Strongly disagree	–	–
Don't know	5	11
Total	**100**	**100**

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of programme country Governments.

134. **There are varying degrees of coordination of policy advice across different United Nations entities.** As shown in figure XXVIII, 65 per cent of resident coordinators agreed that the United Nations country team generally provides policy advice through coordinated process, while 22 referred to single entity processes and 13 per cent to joint ones. Resident coordinators noted that the degree of coordination varied with the topic. Cross-cutting issues such as gender-based violence are more likely to be well coordinated. Several resident coordinators also noted that country team results groups were helpful to ensure coordinated and, where needed, integrated approaches to policy advice.

Figure XXVIII
Coordination and/or integration of policy advice

Question: The United Nations country team generally provides policy advice developed through a process that is:



Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of resident coordinators.

135. The report of the Secretary-General of July 2017 on repositioning the United Nations development system identifies strengthening the policy backbone of the development system to be an urgent undertaking and recognizes that providing integrated policy advice will require the system to function in a new way, with system entities delivering multi-disciplinary advice with one voice, as well as strengthened capacities for data management and innovative solutions at the country level.

D. Assisting countries through normative support

136. The quadrennial review calls on the United Nations development system to assist countries through normative support. This involves supporting the development of global norms and standards, assisting Member States to integrate and align national legislation and policies to agreed norms and standards, and the provision of monitoring and review mechanisms to encourage compliance. For many entities, particularly the specialized agencies, this type of work constitutes the core of their mandate.

137. Most organizations within the United Nations development system are involved in normative work to varying extents, including funds, programmes, specialized agencies and affiliated organizations.

138. The normative work of the United Nations in promoting global norms and standards is one of its key comparative advantages. It sets universally applicable norms and standards for peace and security, economic and sociocultural development, human rights, the rule of law, health and environmental sustainability, among others. The scope of normative work has a wide range, from developing protocols,

establishing norms and guidelines, monitoring and reporting on implementation of conventions and advocacy, to disseminating normative products, among many other things.

139. At the country level, the 2017 DOCO desk review of 23 UNDAFs revealed that all the frameworks had included efforts to employ a human rights-based approach and to define specific contributions to the realization of human rights. The solid performance of the United Nations development system is confirmed by Governments (table 8), as **the United Nations development system was selected as one of two preferred providers by 42 programme country Governments to assist through provision of support on norms and standards**. **Somewhat unexpectedly**, the Bretton Woods institutions follow as a close second as the preferred provider.

140. According to the UNDG information management system, in 2016, 61 per cent of United Nations country teams engaged in the preparation, reporting or follow-up of the universal periodic reviews, 73 per cent facilitated government follow-up of recommendations of treaty bodies and 38 per cent facilitated government follow-up of recommendations by the human rights special procedures mechanisms.

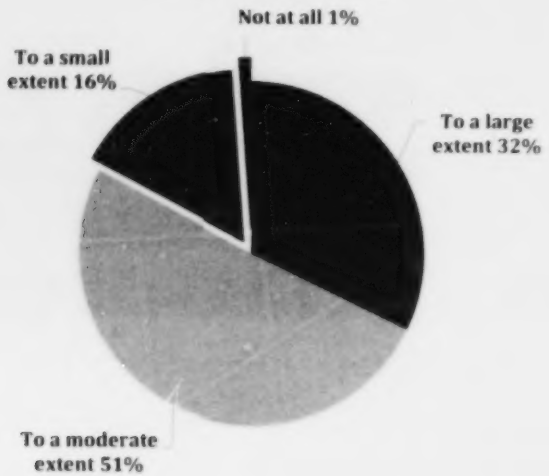
141. A recent study by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU/REP/2016/6) found that while considerable efforts had been made by United Nations country teams to apply a human rights-based approach and promote gender equality, there was less clarity as to how these principles were being integrated into UNDAF programming, and the Unit recommended a systematic approach to address this gap. At the corporate level, UNDG has supported engagement with, reporting to and follow-up on international human rights mechanisms, including through the publication of a web-based guide on strengthening engagement with the international human rights machinery [22] and annual letters to resident coordinators on upcoming opportunities to engage with United Nations human rights mechanisms.

142. As communications are key to supporting better linkages between the normative and operational aspects of the work of United Nations country teams, resident coordinators were asked about the extent to which the country team joint communication strategy (where one exists) contributed to that objective (see figure XXIX).

[22] Available from https://undg.org/human-rights/strengthening-engagement-with-the-international-human-rights-mechanism/.

Figure XXIX
Promoting linkages between the normative and operational activities of the United Nations

Question: In your opinion, to what extent does the joint communications strategy promote adequate linkages between the United Nations' normative and operational activities:



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2017 survey of resident coordinators.
Note: A total of 87 resident coordinators responded to this question. The remaining resident coordinators stated that the country team did not have a joint communications strategy.

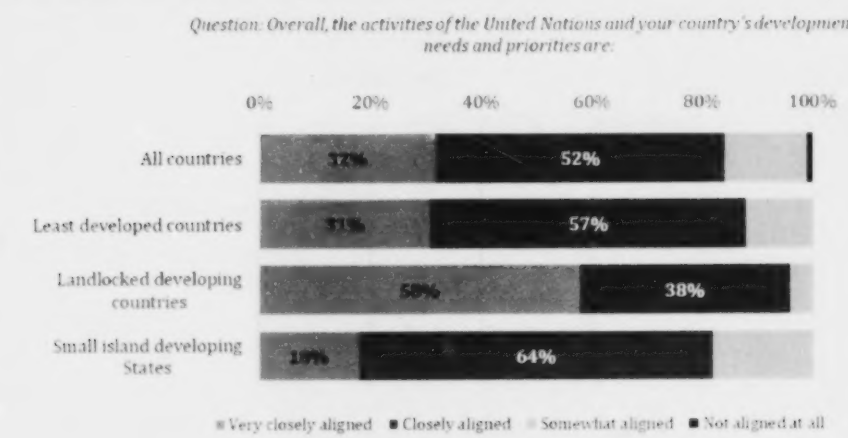
143. While the 2017 desk review of 23 UNDAFs shows that there was progress in terms of applying a human rights-based approach to the common country analysis, there is ample scope to better link the normative and operational dimensions by further strengthening integration of human rights standards and principles in the analysis and feeding the human rights-based approach into the programming work of the country team on the ground, as well as doing so jointly in a manner that cuts across traditional sectoral and thematic silos, in view of the integrated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals.

E. Reinforcing assistance to least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States

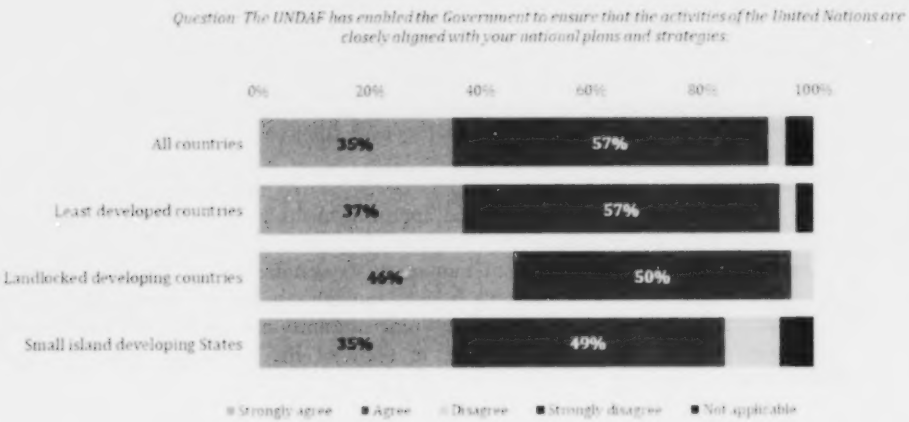
144. The 2016 quadrennial review calls on the United Nations development system to address the special challenges facing the most vulnerable countries in implementing the 2030 Agenda, in particular the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. These challenges include, inter alia, limited institutional capacity, low accumulation of human assets, dependence on ODA, climate change and high vulnerability to external shocks.

Combined, these countries account for a sixth of the world's population living in 91 Member States.

Figure XXX
Alignment with national needs, priorities and plans



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2017 survey of programme country Governments.



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2017 survey of programme country Governments.

145. The degree to which the United Nations system's activities are perceived by Governments to be aligned with national needs and priorities varies across country groupings (see figure XXX). Interestingly, survey data shows that the landlocked developing countries were three times more likely than small island developing States to affirm that United Nations development system activities were "very closely

aligned" with national needs and priorities; and landlocked developing countries were much more likely, at 46 per cent, to "strongly agree" that the UNDAF has assisted with alignment, compared with small island developing States (35 per cent) and least developed countries (37 per cent).

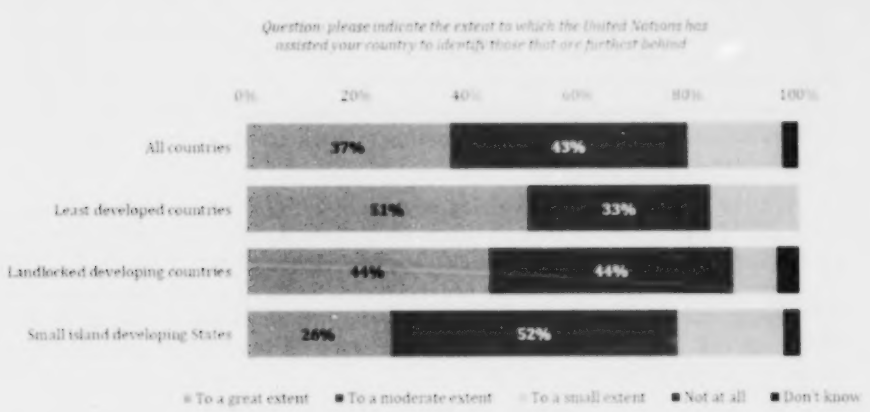
Least developed countries

146. With close to half of all country-level expenditure (see sect. II.C.3), least developed countries benefit from special attention from the United Nations development system to face key challenges, including low levels of human development and economic and structural vulnerabilities and handicaps to growth that limit resilience.

147. The quadrennial review called for the United Nations development system to work in a coordinated manner in support of the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries, which is a new entity created by the General Assembly in December 2016 to improve the use of scientific and technological solutions in the poorest countries and promote their integration into the knowledge-based economy. The Bank is being operationalized with the signing of the host country agreement with the Government of Turkey. To date, Turkey has pledged a $2 million annual contribution to the Bank, and four other countries have pledged a combined amount of $455,000.

148. **Least developed countries are far more positive in their assessment of United Nations assistance to identify those furthest behind, compared with landlocked developing countries and particularly compared with small island developing States** (see figure XXXI). That the system has devoted more attention to this topic in the least developed countries is likely a confluence of both greater needs and more readily available resources for this group of countries.

Figure XXXI
Identifying those that are furthest behind



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2017 survey of programme country Governments.

149. **Some United Nations development system entities are yet to start using the least developed country category in their allocation of development assistance**

and support measures. The Committee for Development Policy surveyed entities in the system regarding recognition of that category. The answers indicated that entities recognized the category and that all entities make contributions to their development in various degrees. Yet, the recognition of the category does not appear to translate into a consistent application of priorities and budget allocation. **Most entities do not have operational guidelines with clear budget targets, nor rules for budget allocations to least developed countries**. This may result in unpredictable resource flows to least developed countries. Furthermore, most United Nations development system entities group the least developed countries alongside other country groupings to assign similar priority status and special priority treatment. In addition, there are large variations in the type and level of specific assistance to least developed countries, often based on the entities' own policies, priorities and criteria, which may not necessarily relate to least developed country status.

150. The 2016 quadrennial review requested the United Nations development system to improve its support to graduating countries in the formulation and implementation of their national transition strategies. One country, Equatorial Guinea, graduated in 2017, and more than a dozen may meet the criteria for graduation by 2021. The survey of programme country Governments included six countries that had graduated (or were scheduled to graduate) from least developed country status in the past four years. Responses suggest that **the effectiveness of United Nations support in the formulation of national transition strategies was broadly positive**: two countries "strongly agreed" that the support had been effective, three "agreed", and one "disagreed". The secretariat of the Committee for Development Policy is building a web-based tool to help prospective least developed country graduates better understand the graduation process and to support them in developing graduation strategies to address the end of their access to special international support measures.

Landlocked developing countries

151. In recognition of the specific challenges faced by landlocked developing countries, the General Assembly urged the United Nations development system to continue to enhance its support including through the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024. By definition, landlocked developing countries lack access to the sea, but they are also typically affected by infrastructure deficiencies and poor trade facilitation, which results in high transit and trade costs, typically leading to weak economic growth and limited overall socioeconomic development.

152. Of the 32 landlocked developing countries, half (16) are in Africa, 10 are in Asia, two are in Latin America and four are in Europe. More than half (17) of all landlocked developing countries are also least developed countries, of which 13 are in Africa. Among the least developed countries, those that are also landlocked developing countries generally perform less well, reflecting more limited productive capacities and competitiveness and higher reliance on the economic and political situations of neighbouring countries.

153. The survey of programme country Governments enquired about the degree of alignment between United Nations activities and national priorities. Figure XXX shows that **landlocked developing countries were the most satisfied with the degree of alignment between United Nations activities and national priorities, with 58 per cent indicating "very close alignment", while small island developing States were the least satisfied (at 18 per cent)**. For landlocked developing countries,

the degree of perceived alignment is similar to that of programme countries as a whole.

Small island developing States

154. In view of their specific social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities, the 2016 quadrennial review also urges the United Nations development system to enhance its support to small island developing States including for the implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway. The small island developing States are mostly geographically dispersed, with small populations, small domestic markets, limited economies of scale, high costs for utilities and high costs for transport to access foreign markets due to distance. Small island developing States also suffer from limited resilience to natural disasters, which frequently have catastrophic economic impacts, not only because of recovery costs but also because of the impact on tourism, which is often one of the main economic sectors of these States.

155. **Small island developing States have a markedly more negative view than other country groups on the alignment of United Nations activities to national needs and priorities, with only 18 per cent of these States reporting these as very closely aligned, compared with a figure of 37 per cent of all other Governments** (see figure XXX). In a similar vein, only 10 per cent of small island developing States "strongly agree" that the United Nations provides evidence-based policy advice that is tailored to national needs and priorities, while for all other Governments this was 30 per cent. These differences indicate that there is room for improvement in tailoring the system's support to the needs of small island developing States.

156. **The UNDAF seems to be a tool that Governments agree could assist in this regard**. While small island developing States were less likely than least developed countries and landlocked developing countries to agree that the UNDAF can help to ensure alignment, 84 per cent of small island developing States either "strongly agreed" or "agreed" that the UNDAF had enabled the Government to ensure that the activities of the United Nations were closely aligned with national plans and strategies, including on the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals.

157. **In response to where the United Nations development system has provided an especially significant contribution in the past two years, small island developing States pointed to combating climate change as the top area for support**. In fact, small island developing States were far more likely, at 72 per cent, than other Member States (44 per cent) to identify combating climate change as a top area of support. The second top area of support in the past two years for small island developing States was health and well-being (69 per cent), followed by gender (62 per cent), where the figure for small island developing States was at least 10 percentage points higher than the overall figures for all countries (see survey report for details).[23]

158. In considering **where United Nations assistance will be most required in the coming four years, 66 per cent of small island developing States again pointed to combating climate change** as their top area where support will be needed, followed by productive employment and sustainable economic growth, and then by poverty eradication.

159. As highlighted in section IV on country presence, some 24 small island developing States are provided with United Nations support through a multi-country

[23] Forthcoming. Will be available from www.un.org/en/ecosoc/en/node/1158673.

office modality. The largest are the Fiji and Barbados multi-country offices, each of which covers 10 small island developing States.

160. **In the survey of programme country Governments, 79 per cent of small island developing States "agreed" that the United Nations presence is adequately tailored for meeting the specific challenges of the country**. This included 11 per cent that "strongly agreed". For countries other than small island developing States, the level of agreement was 89 per cent, including 15 per cent that "strongly agreed". The lower level of agreement among small island developing States is not surprising, given that only 18 per cent of these States felt that the efforts of the United Nations development system were "very closely aligned" with national needs and priorities, compared with 37 per cent of other countries.

F. Supporting middle-income countries to address continuing and emerging challenges

161. Middle-income countries are a heterogeneous group, comprising 54 lower-middle-income countries and 56 upper-middle-income countries. There is considerable diversity within middle-income countries in terms of ODA allocation criteria (with 18 least developed countries, 18 landlocked developing countries and 28 small island developing States) and regional diversity (with 26 middle-income countries in Africa, 25 in the Americas, 36 in the Asia-Pacific region and 10 in Western Asia). Recognizing the diversity among middle-income countries is a critical aspect of providing effective support, tailored to both continuing and emerging challenges of these countries, as called for in the quadrennial review.

162. Given that the middle-income countries group contains more than two thirds of all programme countries, it is not surprising that this diverse group accounted for 60 per cent of all country-level expenditure in 2016. Perhaps more interestingly, nearly half, or 48.5 per cent, of core resources expenditures were spent in lower-middle-income countries, a group which includes 17 of the least developed countries.

163. Middle-income countries confront complex and diverse realities. This is reflected in the top areas selected by middle-income country Governments as requiring the most United Nations assistance in the next four years (see the survey report for a full list of middle-income country top selected areas). Poverty eradication is reflected as the top area across all middle-income countries. Combating climate change and its impacts (Sustainable Development Goal 13) was regarded as a top area for United Nations assistance over the next four years by most middle-income countries; this coincides with the needs for United Nations assistance of high-income programme countries, which also place combating climate change towards the top of the list. Education (Goal 4) is another top-five area identified by both lower- and upper-middle-income countries as key for United Nations assistance that is shared by high-income countries but not by low-income ones.

164. **Resident coordinators in middle-income countries highlighted the steady move away from direct support and towards policy advice and innovative thinking around resource mobilization for the Sustainable Development Goals**. In this regard, one resident coordinator also commented that expertise, approach and financing are fragmented across many entities, impeding the country team from providing integrated high-level policy support on the Goals.

165. The ambition of the 2030 Agenda needs to be met with bold changes in the way the United Nations development system operates. In the case of providing support to

middle-income countries, this implies a gradual shift from a traditional model of direct support and service provision towards greater emphasis on integrated high-quality policy advice, capacity development and support with leveraging partnerships and financing.

G. Partnerships

166. Critical to the success of the 2030 Agenda is an underlying vision where Governments, the private sector, civil society and the United Nations work together to find new ways to leverage genuine partnerships for sustainable growth, including by mobilizing all available resources.

1. Global and institutional level partnerships

167. **The United Nations continues to engage in partnerships through a number of avenues across the system**. The United Nations Office for Partnerships, the Global Compact Office, WHO and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, among others, have a mandate to promote global and multi-stakeholder partnerships. United Nations development system entities are also actively involved in jointly pursuing multi-stakeholder partnerships at the global level, such as the Every Woman, Every Child initiative, the Sustainable Energy for All initiative and the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth.

168. **Individual United Nations development system entities also engage with a large number of partners**. UNHCR, for example, reports having 929 partners for implementation across all regions of the world, 310 strategic agreements signed with NGOs, the United Nations, academia, the private sector, governmental agencies, intergovernmental organizations, foundations and think tanks, and 60 private and corporate partnerships. Similarly, WFP noted having over 1,500 current partnership arrangements.

169. **However, few United Nations entities report tracking the status and results of partnerships, or share knowledge and best practices on their existing partnerships and strategies**. UNHCR conducts an annual independent survey on partnerships while monitoring performance throughout the year. It has also established a partner portal which is being expanded for use by UNICEF and WFP. In addition, the UNICEF monitoring and reporting platform annually tracks the status of its partnerships, including results. These initiatives could be a model for other entities to build on.

170. **Furthermore, the United Nations development system is mandated in the quadrennial review to assist Governments in leveraging their own partnerships and to act as a convener of stakeholders across constituencies**. To effectively play this role, country teams need to develop the necessary skill sets and gain a better understanding of the available resources. Among other important areas, including partnerships to mobilize technology, knowledge and expertise, the United Nations development system has a key role to play in supporting Governments to take advantage of diversified and innovative funding sources that could complement traditional sources, and to align private financial flows with the 2030 Agenda. Aligning private financial flows with the 2030 Agenda requires that Governments and markets build awareness and trust, align regulations and enable innovative instruments to foster risk-sharing and accountability. In this regard, UNDP has created a tool called the development finance assessment tool, which provides planning and finance ministries with data and analysis on the changing picture of a country's

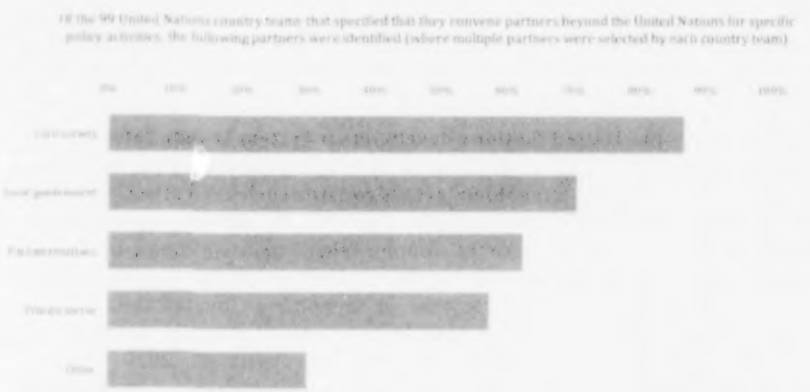
development finance. The assessment also produces recommendations on how development finance in a country can better support the achievement of national priorities and results, including the Sustainable Development Goals (see sect. II.D.1).

171. **Despite notable examples, it is clear that much remains to be done to ensure that the United Nations development system has the right skill sets to assist Member States**. Overall, adequate system-wide policies, mechanisms and guidelines are required to both: (a) address risks related to preserving the legitimacy, integrity and independence of the United Nations in the face of new partnerships, particularly with the private sector; and (b) maximize the effectiveness and efficiencies of partnerships.

2. Country-level partnerships

172. **At the country level, 76 per cent of all country teams collaborated with external partners during 2016 on a range of areas**, in particular gender equality; education; health; peace, justice and strong institutions; and employment/decent work. Of the 99 country teams that stated that they engaged with partners, most partnerships took place with civil society (87 per cent), local governments (72 per cent), parliamentarians (63 per cent), the private sector (59 per cent) and other actors (30 per cent), which includes donors/development partners and academia, religious partners and international NGOs (see figure XXXII). The considerably low level of collaboration with development partners, donors and academia is further substantiated by the findings of the 2017 UNDAF desk review, which suggest that the overall engagement of multilateral banks and international financial institutions with UNDAFs seems to be narrowly concentrated in the financing stage, rather than throughout the UNDAF process. Furthermore, enhanced interaction with academia remains vital in keeping up to date with the evolving body of knowledge innovation and policy research, which are fundamental to achieving the 2030 Agenda.

Figure XXXII
Collaboration with external partners, 2016

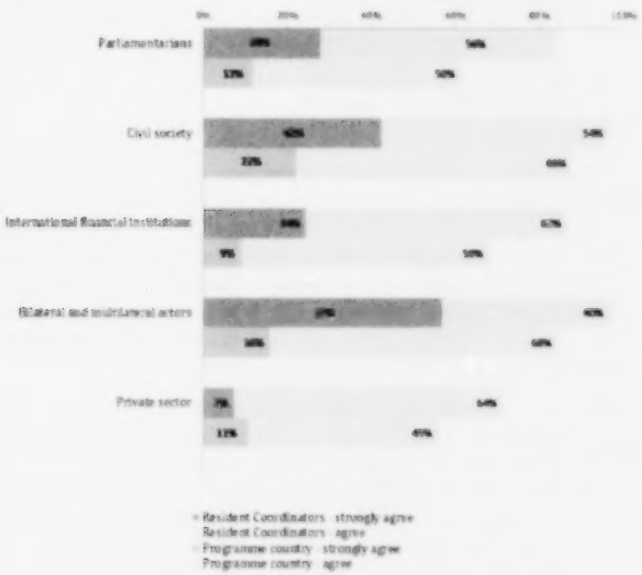


Source: UNDG information management system

173. **There is room to intensify engagement, particularly with private sector actors** (see figure XXXIII). Governments and resident coordinators were asked whether country teams engage "as much as possible" with partners. Resident coordinators tend to assess the current levels of engagement as quite high, particularly in terms of engaging with bilateral and multilateral actors, as shown below. Resident coordinators also judge engagement with civil society to be substantial, while engagement with the private sector is deemed to be considerably lower. Overall, Governments are of the view that there is much more scope for engagement by the system with all partners, in particular with the private sector. The review of the role of the Global Compact and its application in the context of country teams, including to enhance engagement with entrepreneurs and the private sector, may prove as one helpful measure in further advancing engagement with the private sector on the ground.

Figure XXXIII
Engagement in partnerships by the United Nations country team

Question: The United Nations country team engages as much as possible with:



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2017 survey of programme country Governments and Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2017 survey of resident coordinators.

174. **The United Nations remains largely the preferred partner of choice by programme country Governments for support on global, regional and national issues** (see table 11). Governments were invited to assess the performance of the United Nations system in relation to that of other types of development partners, by selecting the top two development partners that best support the country's needs in different categories.

Table 11
Countries' preferred providers of external support, by support category

Question: Select UP TO TWO partners that you consider to be the preferred provider of each type of support

	United Nations system (agencies, funds and programmes)	*Bretton Woods institutions*	*Other multilateral and regional institutions not part of the United Nations*	*OECD DAC partners*	*Southern partners*	*Thematic or alliance-based partners (e.g. the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria)*
Ranked first ***Ranked second***	*Number of times selected*					
Global challenges requiring common action (e.g. climate change, water, migration)	**79**	**32**	24	19	9	17
Supporting regional or subregional cooperation	**41**	18	**46**	21	22	6
Supporting South-South and triangular cooperation	**57**	7	29	14	**46**	4
Assisting Governments in leveraging partnerships	**65**	**36**	23	14	9	–
Mobilizing external resources for development	**57**	**48**	22	30	7	–
Government has insufficient experience with this category of partner	9	7	11	18	30	24

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of programme country Governments.

175. **Turning to performance factors, the United Nations system compares favourably in the areas of aligning with national priorities, trust, impartiality and accountability to beneficiaries** (see table 12). While results are encouraging, room for progress remains. Indeed, other survey results highlight room for improvement in terms of both alignment and accountability.

176. **The areas where the United Nations is perceived to perform less well are "achieving planned results on time" and "making decisions transparently".** Regarding the timely achievement of results, there is no significant difference between how the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions are viewed. The United Nations system's perceived weakness regarding transparency is consistent with feedback from programme countries, reported elsewhere in the survey, notably regarding reporting to national authorities. The survey results in 2017 closely mirror the pattern of 2015 results.

Table 12
Countries' preferred providers of external support, by performance factors

Question: select UP TO TWO partners that best satisfy your Government's needs in respect of each of the performance factors

Ranked first Ranked second	United Nations system (agencies, funds and programmes)	Bretton Woods institutions	Other multilateral and regional institutions not part of the United Nations	OECD/DAC partners	Southern partners	Thematic or alliance-based partners (e.g. the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria)
	Number of times selected					
Is impartial	**44**	**21**	8	10	9	6
Is accountable to beneficiaries	**54**	**28**	13	13	4	3
Is trusted by national partners	**55**	**29**	12	13	8	9
Aligns assistance with national needs and priorities	**66**	**33**	17	16	7	4
Responds quickly to new development needs and priorities	**48**	**33**	14	13	8	7
Achieves planned results on time	**31**	**30**	9	13	2	2
Makes decisions transparently	**43**	**28**	12	10	6	4
Willingly collaborates with other external development partners at the country level	**50**	**27**	14	12	2	4
Government has insufficient experience with this category of partner	17	6	9	13	26	15

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of programme country Governments.

I. Support for South-South cooperation

177. While not a substitute for North-South cooperation, South-South cooperation is having a positive development impact in developing countries. The 2030 and Addis Ababa Agendas require stepped up support for South-South and triangular cooperation as differentiated forms of international development collaboration. This is an area where the United Nations development system can maximize its leveraging role for partnerships and resource mobilization for the Sustainable Development Goals.

178. South-South cooperation displays an increasing trend (see A/72/297). A growing number of countries have either created agencies dedicated to South-South cooperation or have boosted South-South cooperation capacities within their cooperation institutions. **The 2017 programme country Government survey shows 74 per cent of survey respondents providing development cooperation to other countries** (table 13). Of these countries, 84 per cent exchange information and best practices on the use of science, technology and innovation to advance sustainable development.

Table 13
Provision of South-South cooperation

	Yes		*No*		*Don't know*		*Total*	
Activity	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
We provide development cooperation to other countries	81	74	22	20	7	6	110	100
We exchange information and best practices with South-South partners on science, technology and innovation to help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals	68	84	6	7	7	9	81	100

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of programme country Governments.

179. **Most United Nations development system entities have incorporated South-South cooperation into their strategic plans, but progress is more limited in terms of reporting on South-South cooperation**. For the past three reporting cycles, headquarters surveys have reported the extent to which South-South cooperation is incorporated into the planning instruments of system entities, into their strategic plans and into their annual reports (see tables 14 and 15). In 2017, South-South cooperation was integrated into the strategic plans of all but four United Nations entities (OHCHR, UN-Habitat, UNISDR and UNRWA). In addition, 72 per cent of responding United Nations entities report on South-South cooperation in their annual reports (among those that do not are ESCWA, UNCTAD, UNHCR and WHO).

Table 14
Incorporation of South-South cooperation in the strategic plans of United Nations entities

	Has your entity integrated South-South cooperation into its strategic plans?		
Response	*2014*	*2015*	*2017*
Yes	20	23	25
No	1	2	4
Skipped	1	–	–
Total	**22**	**25**	**29**

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of United Nations entity headquarters.

Table 15
Incorporation of South-South cooperation in the annual reports of United Nations entities

	Does your agency report on South-South cooperation in its annual report?		
Response	*2014*	*2015*	*2017*
Yes	18	20	21
No	3	5	8

Does your agency report on South-South cooperation in its annual report?			
Response	*2014*	*2015*	*2017*
Skipped	1	–	–
Total	**22**	**25**	**29**

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of United Nations entity headquarters.

180. United Nations entities outlined the key challenges faced in mainstreaming and enhancing support for South-South cooperation. **Several entities mentioned a lack of procedures or systems for management and evaluation and for reporting**, through which lessons could be learned. One entity noted that a number of South-South activities, rather than being designed as an integral part of a planned programme were often single-time, small-scale activities, the impact of which was difficult to assess. Some entities mentioned lack of resources to support South-South cooperation, while others indicated that this modality of cooperation called for unfamiliar operational procedures.

181. Resident coordinators were also asked about the challenges for the country team in providing the support requested for South-South and triangular cooperation (see table 16). **Lack of resources and capacity remains the dominant challenge in the view of resident coordinators**. The need for a corporate strategy and policy, which appeared less significant in 2015, emerges again as the second most important challenge in 2017.

Table 16
Challenges for United Nations country teams in providing support for South-South cooperation, 2014–2017

Type of challenge	*2014 Number*	*2014 Percentage*	*2015 Number*	*2015 Percentage*	*2017 Number*	*2017 Percentage*
Lack of dedicated resources and capacity	65	81	55	61	39	64
Nature of the request	19	24	18	17	10	16
Business rules and procedures	17	21	15	20	10	16
Need for corporate strategy and policy	24	30	14	16	15	25
Other	13	16	22	24	14	23

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of resident coordinators.

182. The responses of **Governments confirm similar challenges regarding suitable implementation and monitoring procedures and funding**. A leading Southern partner mentioned the difficulty that some United Nations entities seem to have in understanding South-South cooperation as a modality of multilateral cooperation, as well as in providing guidelines and practices on how to proceed on the ground.

183. Notwithstanding, at the country level there is clear progress on United Nations support for South-South cooperation, with **84 per cent of Governments indicating that the United Nations has undertaken activities to support South-South and triangular cooperation** and only 5 per cent noting no such support. Based on the resident coordinator survey, **support for knowledge sharing and mutual learning**

is the leading type of South-South cooperation assistance requested, while there has been increased demand for financial and capacity support for South-South cooperation management (table 17).

Table 17
Types of support requested within South-South cooperation, 2014–2017

(Percentage)

Type of support	*2014*	*2015*	*2017*
Provision of access to knowledge and expertise of other developing countries	84	86	88
Identification of cooperation partners	56	56	51
Delivery of cross-border or interregional projects or programmes	35	46	42
Support towards regional integration	38	46	47
Financial support	38	37	55
Capacity-building on management of South-South cooperation	30	32	43
Support for negotiation capacity development	25	29	27
Serving as an administrative agent to manage cooperation projects	21	21	25
Others	6	1	9

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of resident coordinators.

184. **There is scope for fostering collaborative approaches on South-South cooperation through the UNDAF**. While 87 per cent of resident coordinator survey respondents noted that Governments had South-South cooperation activities, only 56 per cent of resident coordinators stated that UNDAFs "substantively address" South-South and triangular cooperation (see table 18). **UNDG aimed to address this gap through its 2017 revision of the UNDAF guidelines**, which call for UNDAFs to consider the use of South-South cooperation as a cooperation modality in partnership development.

Table 18
Government activities on South-South cooperation and requests for United Nations support on South-South cooperation

	Does the Government have activities in the area of South-South cooperation?		*Has the Government requested the United Nations system to support its cooperation with other developing countries?*	
Response	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
Yes	95	87	82	84
No	5	5	14	14
Don't know	9	8	2	2
Total	**109**	**100**	**98**	**100**

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of programme country Governments.

185. **South-South cooperation support is typically not requested of the United Nations system as a whole but instead from individual country team members** and is addressed in some country programme documents (see table 19). This is

consistent with findings on collective approaches to United Nations support, which show entities functioning fairly independently of one another. Several resident coordinators saw potential or referred to ongoing efforts to improve coordination in this area.

Table 19
Collective approaches to United Nations support for South-South cooperation

Existence of collective approaches to United Nations support for South-South cooperation	*Number*	*Percentage*
The United Nations country team has an agreed strategy to support joint activities in this area	4	4
Some entities carry out South-South activities jointly	28	26
South-South activities are carried out by entities independently	76	70
Total	**108**	**100**

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of resident coordinators.

186. In July 2017, the Government of Honduras, the United Nations country team in Honduras and the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation signed a first-of-its-kind memorandum of understanding, which brings together all three parties to promote and strengthen South-South and triangular cooperation. The memorandum of understanding defines the commitments of each party, based on their comparative advantages. Under the memorandum, the Government of Honduras will be both a recipient and a provider of South-South and triangular cooperation. Since then, the Government of Panama has entered into a similar agreement. Such institutionalized and system-wide support by the country team to South-South cooperation can serve as a model for other countries.

187. Overall, it is clear that there is an increasing trend towards more South-South cooperation and that Governments are increasingly requesting support from the United Nations in this area. However, much remains to be done to reorient the expertise and institutional arrangements to support Member States in such endeavours.

H. Enhancing complementarity among humanitarian, development and sustaining-peace efforts

188. The quadrennial review calls for a comprehensive whole-of-system response, including greater cooperation and complementarity among development, disaster risk reduction, humanitarian action, and sustaining peace, stating it is fundamental to most efficiently and effectively addressing needs and attaining the Sustainable Development Goals.

189. **A number of efforts are under way at the institutional level to promote coherence and coordination within and across development, humanitarian, human rights and peacebuilding action**. UNDG established a results group, co-chaired by UNDP and the Peacebuilding Support Office, dedicated to policy and operational dialogue, bringing together key stakeholders from the development and peacebuilding communities. The Group coordinates closely with other key counterparts, the UNDG results group on giving voice to common values and norms

(co-chaired by OHCHR and UNESCO) and the humanitarian Inter-Agency Standing Committee and its task team on the humanitarian-development nexus, to promote a coherent approach, including through a joint set of messages and guidance products. New UNDG arrangements are currently being developed, which may result in changes to the set-up of this and other UNDG results groups. In addition, the Secretary-General has established a steering committee of principals to foster synergy between development and humanitarian activities.

190. **A new partnership framework between the United Nations and the World Bank for crisis affected situations was established in early 2017**. The framework expands collaboration to encompass situations at risk of violent conflict; ongoing conflict; high levels of forced displacement; and protracted and post-crisis situations. **The United Nations-World Bank fragility and conflict partnership trust fund established in early 2017 a humanitarian-development-peace nexus initiative**, which funds activities in a small number of pilot countries to identify collective outcomes and deliver integrated responses. In addition, in 2016 the United Nations, the World Bank and the European Union collaborated to refine and apply a joint approach for recovery and peacebuilding needs assessments.

191. **At the country level, partnership agreements to enhance collaboration are also emerging**. According to the UNDG results report, by 2016, 34 per cent of country teams had formalized collaboration with key partners, including the World Bank, to deliver coordinated crisis assistance. Just under a third had undertaken joint risk management assessments with such partners. In addition, two best practices have emerged in the United Nations strategic frameworks for Somalia and Lebanon. The provisional United Nations strategic framework [24] for Somalia aims to provide development responses to humanitarian challenges, such as food insecurity, while also addressing concerns on peace and security. The United Nations strategic framework for Lebanon [25] serves as the reference document for the United Nations system presence in the country, combining support for security, development and humanitarian response.

192. **The need for greater cooperation is demonstrated by the variety of development, humanitarian and peace activities that are taking place at the country level**, as shown in table 20. In this context, 57 per cent of Governments stated that they had national mechanisms to coordinate development and peacebuilding efforts supported by the country team; and of these national mechanisms, 84 per cent are institutionalized and 81 per cent are country led.

[24] The Somalia provisional United Nations strategic framework is available from https://ims.undg.org//downloadFile/d4f0bf65d752499a60d04e8bf4e82e26b63a6ac096f4907199b32742a320f0fd.

[25] The Lebanon United Nations strategic framework 2017–2020 is available from https://ims.undg.org//downloadFile/cb89cd57a4afdc70256588a757670074acf2c9ac3296e240e53f0914e5756355.

Table 20
Focus areas of United Nations activities

Which areas of activity apply in your location?	*Response (percentage)*
Development	92
Disaster risk reduction	66
Humanitarian action	39
Sustaining peace	32

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of programme country Governments.

Table 21
Degree of collaboration among United Nations agencies

Assess the level of collaboration among United Nations agencies engaged in more than one area	*Response (percentage)*
Very close collaboration	18
Close collaboration	66
Not close collaboration	11
No collaboration at all	1
Don't know	2
Not applicable	2

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of programme country Governments.

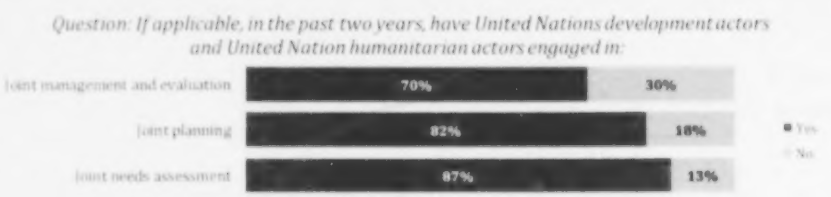
193. **From the perspective of Governments, much more needs to be done to improve collaboration across sectors among United Nations agencies, especially in countries with large cross-sectoral programmes** (see table 21). Overall, 18 per cent of Governments reported very close collaboration between United Nations agencies across sectors; 66 per cent reported close collaboration; 11 per cent deemed that collaboration between agencies across sectors was not close; and 1 per cent indicated that there was no collaboration at all. Notably, 4 out of the 10 largest United Nations programme countries, which together represent $4.2 billion in OAD (or 19 per cent of total country-level expenditures) were among those that did not state there was close or very close collaboration. Overall, programme countries seem to perceive that there is room for the United Nations system to work better across sectors.

194. Programme country Governments were asked to indicate whether the resident coordinator prepared a joint humanitarian and development needs assessment to inform strategic decisions. **While 53 per cent of Governments had noted the need to address a situation with humanitarian consequences, only 41 per cent indicated the availability of a comprehensive joint assessment to inform strategic decisions.** Such an assessment did not take place in 9 per cent of cases, while 50 per cent of Governments indicated "don't know" or "not applicable".

195. **Yet the views of resident coordinators on collaboration and coherence seem to contradict the perspective of Governments.** A total of 87 per cent of resident coordinators noted that, over the past two years, United Nations development and humanitarian actors had engaged in joint needs assessments and 82 per cent of resident coordinators stated that joint planning had taken place (see figure XXXIV).

At 70 per cent, resident coordinators reported a slightly lower rate of collaboration on joint management and evaluation efforts concerning progress and collective outcomes. In addition, 82 per cent of resident coordinators stated that country team members provided them with sufficient and timely information to ensure strong coherence of development and humanitarian activities; out of the 27 programmes identified as "large", just one resident coordinator disagreed with that statement.

Figure XXXIV
Engagement between United Nations development and United Nations humanitarian actors



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2017 survey of resident coordinators.

196. **While resident coordinators have a positive view of collaboration across the humanitarian, development and peacebuilding nexus, they report better collaboration between development and humanitarian action than between development and peacebuilding**, although there remains room for improvement in both cases (see table 22).

Table 22
Extent of collaboration between development and humanitarian action, and between development and peacebuilding

To what extent is development work in the following areas jointly undertaken with humanitarian (column 1) and peacebuilding (column 2) actors		*Humanitarian (percentage)*	*Peacebuilding (percentage)*
Collective and/or complementary results	To a large extent	51	26
	To a small or moderate extent	46	45
	Not at all	3	29
Joint analysis	To a large extent	48	34
	To a small or moderate extent	50	40
	Not at all	2	26
Joint planning	To a large extent	45	29
	To a small or moderate extent	52	42
	Not at all	3	28
Joint coordination mechanisms	To a large extent	44	32
	To a small or moderate extent	52	39
	Not at all	3	29

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of resident coordinators.

197. **There have been repeated calls for the relevant United Nations entities to integrate disaster risk reduction into their activities**, in addition to adopting a preventative approach to managing disaster risks and averting lapses into conflict, as expressed, inter alia, in General Assembly resolutions 67/226 and 71/243 and through the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 and the New Urban Agenda.

198. In response, at the global level, in 2016 the United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience: Towards a Risk-informed and Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development was endorsed by CEB as a system-wide instrument to enhance the coherence and quality of support provided on disaster risk reduction and a monitoring system was developed to review and guide progress. In addition, CEB endorsed an analytical framework on risk and resilience, which seeks to provide a harmonized understanding on the concepts of risk, prevention and resilience, as a basis for coherent joint analysis and planning.

199. At the country level, integration of disaster risk reduction into planning frameworks is taking place. In response to the survey, 89 per cent of resident coordinators stated that the UNDAF substantively addressed disaster risk reduction, 89 per cent indicated that the UNDAF addressed the drivers of needs, risks and vulnerability and 48 per cent noted that peacebuilding/sustaining peace actions were included in the UNDAF.[26] The experience of Governments further validates the prioritization of disaster risk reduction. Over half **(53 per cent) of Governments indicated that their country had needed to address a situation with humanitarian consequences in the past four years.**

200. In the context of increasingly frequent, severe and complex natural and human-induced threats, there is a growing concern that these crises will reverse hard-won gains towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals unless the principles of risk, resilience and prevention are adequately prioritized.

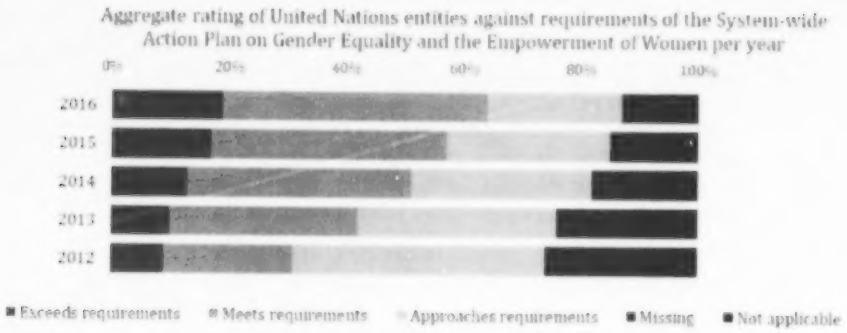
I. Securing gender equality and women's empowerment

201. The quadrennial review calls on the United Nations development system to improve efforts to promote women's empowerment and gender equality, including through the full implementation of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, gender scorecards to assess and strengthen country-level progress in mainstreaming gender and continued efforts to achieve gender balance across the system, including the resident coordinator system.

202. **The System-wide Action Plan has continued to make progress in gender mainstreaming** (see figure XXXV). Since its roll-out in 2012, system-wide performance has improved, with 64 per cent of all 2016 ratings in the "meets" or "exceeds" categories.

[26] A total of 39 per cent of the resident coordinators reported that peacebuilding/sustaining peace was not applicable to their UNDAF.

Figure XXXV
Comparative analysis of overall ratings in gender mainstreaming for the United Nations system, 2012–2016



Source: UN-Women

203. UN-Women has coordinated **an extensive system-wide consultative process to develop the next generation of the System-wide Action Plan, to be rolled out in 2018**. The framework introduces new indicators to monitor system-wide contributions to gender results, strengthens existing requirements and highlights key drivers of progress. The Joint Inspection Unit review of the first generation System-wide Action Plan, which is a continuing mandate from the 2012 quadrennial review, has been deferred to 2018.

204. Promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women has multiplier effects towards sustainable development. In 2016, gender remained the number one area of concentration of United Nations joint programmes, with 62 per cent of UNDAFs featuring gender-specific results at the outcome level. **The gender scorecard is also being updated in alignment with the System-wide Action Plan and the new UNDAF guidance.** The updated framework was piloted in six country teams (Egypt, India, Iraq, Uganda, Ukraine and Viet Nam). Gender scorecards remain an instrumental tool in promoting improved performance by country teams.

205. As gender inequality and discrimination can result in women experiencing and being affected by crises differently from men, **new system-wide approaches are being developed to ensure gender-responsive humanitarian action** in a way that strengthens linkages between relief, development and resilience.

206. **A United Nations system-wide gender parity strategy was launched in September 2017**, aimed at achieving parity at senior levels by 2021 and across the board by 2028. The strategy, which complements the System-wide Action Plan, is intended to feed into entity-specific implementation plans and enable tracking and reporting on progress. In response, UNDG has decided to hold a session of the Resident Coordinator Assessment Centre exclusively dedicated to women candidates, to be convened in 2018.

V. Improving the functioning of the United Nations development system

A. Presence and division of labour

207. The 2030 Agenda requires a new generation of United Nations country teams with a configuration in terms of composition, skill sets, functions and focus that is fit to deliver on the unique and increasingly diverse needs of countries.

208. The quadrennial review recognizes in particular that the presence of United Nations development system entities at the country level should be tailored to meet the specific challenges and needs of countries. Yet the presence of system entities is highly fragmented, with United Nations agencies operating in different locations, often in isolation from one another. Among other factors, this limits the ability of the system to provide integrated efficient and effective support to countries.

209. **In the provision of tailored support, Governments and resident coordinators indicate there is room for further improvement, including in terms of staff capacities and skills** (see table 23). Both programme countries and resident coordinators were asked whether the presence of the United Nations[27] was adequately tailored to meet countries' needs. One sixth of Governments and resident coordinators (14 per cent and 15 per cent, respectively) "strongly agreed" that the United Nations presence was "adequately tailored", and just 14 per cent of Governments expressed strong agreement as to whether United Nations staff had the right mix of capacities and skills to support the country's development.

Table 23
Tailoring of United Nations country presence to the needs of Governments and mix of capacities and skills of United Nations staff

(Percentage)

	The United Nations country presence is "adequately tailored" to meet the country's needs		*The United Nations staff have the right mix of capacities and skills to support the country's development*
	Governments	*Resident coordinators*	*Governments*
Strongly agree	14	15	14
Agree	72	60	62
Disagree	9	24	13
Strongly disagree	3	1	1
Don't know	2	–	10
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs surveys of programme country Governments and resident coordinators.

210. **In terms of challenges to aligning the United Nations presence to meet the specific needs of the country, some resident coordinators mentioned limited**

[27] For the purposes of the survey, "United Nations presence" refers, inter alia, to the number of entities, the number and location of offices and the number and expertise of staff.

capacities of the Office of the Resident Coordinator, the weak authority that they hold over United Nations system activities and the lack of influence over which entities are represented in the country. Others highlighted challenges on the government side, such as inadequate data, weak planning and coordination mechanisms and limited administrative capacity.

211. **In addition, resident coordinators pointed to skills gaps in country teams in various areas, such as economic analysis capabilities and capacity for Sustainable Development Goal implementation and integrated development.** Having management structures that are based on results and are flexible and oriented to upstream policy advice was also reported as lacking. The call for the United Nations development system to pay more attention to economic analysis was also echoed by several programme country Governments.

212. As shown in table 24 below, **Governments and resident coordinators have similar views in terms of the cost-effectiveness and flexibility of the system**, although Governments appear to find the system to be slightly more cost-effective and flexible than resident coordinators do. Elaborating on the latter, some resident coordinators noted that the cost of maintaining separate entity representations, insufficient progress on business operations strategies and entities' presence being determined more by headquarters considerations than country needs to be among the principal causes for lack of cost-effectiveness and flexibility. All actors agreed that presence should be based on a considered assessment of the country's current needs.

213. One Government in the Latin America and Caribbean region emphasized that it was "crucial that the United Nations prioritizes consolidating technical and professional teams in the areas of competency of each of its programmes, funds and agencies. It also needs to simplify processes and optimize its administrative areas including re-sizing the administrative staff".

Table 24
Perceptions of the United Nations development system's flexibility, cost-effectiveness and ability to collaborate

(Percentage)

	Is flexible		*Is cost-effective*		*Operates collaboratively*	
The United Nations	*Governments*	*Resident coordinators*	*Governments*	*Resident coordinators*	*Governments*	*Resident coordinators*
Strongly agree	19	12	8	9	15	17
Agree	67	59	58	47	71	72
Disagree	12	26	18	38	12	10
Strongly disagree	1	3	2	3	1	1
Don't know	2	–	14	3	1	–
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs surveys of programme country Governments and resident coordinators

214. Resident coordinators reported that while the United Nations system generally operates collaboratively, there is room for improvement. **Joint programming, thematic funds and joint mobilization strategies were highlighted in this regard**, as well as the need to address the constraints of raising funds individually to sustain

their programmes and office presence. However, these improvements may not be sufficient to meet the demands of the 2030 Agenda.

215. **Ninety-four resident coordinators commented on potential synergies that could improve the efficiency of human, financial and physical resources.** There were numerous calls for increased joint programming, or making it the default mode, and for establishing thematic funds with two or more participating entities to encourage dialogue and complementarity, joint resource mobilization strategies and practices and increased joint work planning. **Many resident coordinators provided proposals on how to improve presence on the ground.** Many suggested reviewing the number of representative offices, minimizing the number and scope of individual back offices and coordinating decisions on office space to maximize co-location. They also suggested that staff of entities with minimal presence could be integrated into the management structures of larger organizations to ensure efficiency and resource maximization. Non-resident agencies, or those with a very small presence, could work with the resident coordinator before embarking on new activities to explore whether entities that are already present would be able to undertake the planned activities. In maximizing entity-specific technical expertise, it was noted that OHCHR had provided specialists to some resident coordinator offices, which was judged to be "successful and cost-efficient".

216. Given the integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda, demands on the resident coordinator system to leverage and mobilize United Nations expertise in response to national priorities are expected to increase in the coming years. According to DOCO, almost all resident coordinator offices (97 per cent) supported non-resident agencies, while 66 per cent facilitated regional engagement in country programming and external representation.

217. Part of rationalizing presence includes co-location of United Nations entities (see box 3). As well as being a cost-saving measure, co-location can enhance synergies on the programming side. As currently defined by UNDG:

(a) A **United Nations House** entails the co-location of two or more resident United Nations entities as well as the Office of the Resident Coordinator. The name United Nations House is conferred upon a recommendation of UNDG, and there can only be one in any given country;

(b) **Common premises** refers specifically to the co-location of two or more resident United Nations entities. Common premises can be established at the national and subnational level, and single-entity premises and common premises are not mutually exclusive.

Box 3
Challenges to the establishment of common premises

In a 2014 UNDG task team report on the strategy for establishing United Nations common premises in the period 2014–2017, UNDG highlighted challenges to the establishment of common premises. The absence of a formal United Nations policy for capital funding of field office premises and the lack of sufficient technical capacity to manage real estate projects may pose barriers. Security concerns are another obstacle, where locating all United Nations agencies in common premises may not be advisable based on country-specific requirements of the minimum operating security standards. The turnover of members of country teams, a change of focus and lack of commitment may also result in swaying away from establishing common premises.

218. **A UNDG task team is reviewing system-wide databases to establish global data on premises in order to increase the number of common premises.** Data on United Nations presence, disaggregated by programme expenditure, is presented in table 25.

Table 25
Rationalization of United Nations presence on the ground

	All countries	*Countries with large expenditures*	*Countries with medium expenditures*	*Countries with small expenditures*
Average number of resident United Nations country team members[a]	12.0	15.6	12.5	7.8
Average number of single-entity premises[a]	16.1	34.3	22.3	5.7
Average number of common premises	3.0	7.2	4.0	1.0
Average number of United Nations entities in each common premises[a]	4.1	3.7	3.9	5.9
Proportion of premises that are common premises (percentage)[a]	15.9	17.4	15.3	14.4
Fraction of United Nations country teams with a United Nations House[b]	62/131	6/27	11/45	40/59

Sources: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs operations management teams survey, DOCO and UNDG task team on common premises.

Note: The reported premises figures are based on a database containing data collected by the Department of Safety and Security. In the database, 12 per cent of the data were insufficiently detailed to determine an appropriate classification for the purpose of the review.

[a] Information from DOCO.

[b] Information from UNDG task team on common premises.

219. Table 25 also illustrates the degree of co-location of United Nations entities' premises. On average, countries with large expenditures have the highest number of single-entity premises (34.3), likely owing to the size of each entity's portfolio and the correlated larger number of personnel, which also may likely lead to difficulties finding large premises that meet security policy requirements. Countries with small expenditures show the highest number of entities in each common premise, nearly one and a half more entities than the average. Entities that are present in countries with small expenditures are more likely, at 67 per cent, than entities in large or medium expenditure countries, 22 per cent and 24 per cent respectively, to be located in a United Nations House. Over time, a combination of (a) fewer single-entity office premises, (b) an increase in the number of common premises, and (c) an increase in the average number of entities being housed within each common premises, would together significantly improve consolidation of office presence.

220. This data reinforces the proposals in the July 2017 report of the Secretary-General on the repositioning of the United Nations development system, which emphasized the need to establish objective criteria to rationalize physical presence on a country-by-country basis.

221. At present, the multi-country office modality is particularly used in the context of programme countries with small populations where the volume of resources is also small (although resources per capita may still be high), which are often small island

developing States. The multi-country offices in Fiji and Barbados each work across 10 small island developing States in their respective regions. Table 26 shows the expenditures on United Nations operational activities for development in each of the countries that the offices cover. The 10 countries within the Fiji office have combined expenditures of $70 million and the 10 countries covered by the Barbados office have a total of $15 million.

Table 26
Expenditures at the Fiji and Barbados multi-country offices, 2016

(Hundreds of thousands of United States dollars)

Country (Fiji multi-country office)	*Expenditures*			*Country (Barbados multi-country office)*	*Expenditures*		
	Core	*Non-core*	*Total*		*Core*	*Non-core*	*Total*
Fiji	12 988	44 586	57 574	Barbados	7 830	3 308	11 138
Kiribati	463	95	558	Antigua and Barbuda	62	214	276
Marshall Islands	163	-	164	Anguilla	–	–	–
Micronesia	441	37	478	British Virgin Islands	–	–	–
Nauru	67	-	67	Dominica	482	66	548
Palau	41	-	41	Grenada	76	1 858	1 934
Solomon Islands	1 612	6 407	8 020	Montserrat	72	–	72
Tonga	626	413	1 039	Saint Lucia	133	186	319
Tuvalu	60	31	92	Saint Kitts and Nevis	118	463	582
Vanuatu	774	1 641	2 416	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	105	381	487
Total	**17 237**	**53 210**	**70 447**	**Total**	**8 878**	**6 476**	**15 356**

Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

222. There are 20 resident entities that are members of the Fiji multi-country office, meaning that the average expenditure among these entities in 2016 was $3.5 million. For the seven resident entities that are members of the Barbados multi-country office, the average expenditure was $2.2 million, higher than the average expenditure per entity in all small island developing States. In the case of the Fiji multi-country office, the average entity expenditure was also higher than the $2.7 million average for small programme countries.

223. The above analysis shows that **multi-country offices can generate economies of scale** by having one country team responsible for several programme countries, which in turn results in programme benefits for those countries. Consideration should be given to conducting reviews of the potential benefits and disadvantages of implementing this approach in other programme countries with small expenditures, not necessarily small island developing States, in order to ensure the best possible support is being provided.

224. On a related note, in the context of micro-States, as well as countries where resources are scarce, **the benefits of a multi-country office model lie in its potential to provide an integrated vision, leadership, decision-making power and greater reach and access**. Reach and access, in particular, refer not only to efficiencies, namely savings in terms of human and financial resources, but also access to regional and subregional institutions, networks, mechanisms and instruments, including at the

intergovernmental level. In that regard, there are important findings and conclusions of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs mission to the Fiji and Samoa multi-country offices that may warrant reconsideration (see A/71/63-E/2016/8).

225. As an organizational model, it is important not to equate "presence" with physical presence. There are a number of differentiated presence and programming arrangement models, and not all United Nations entities necessarily have a comparative advantage in each country setting. In addition, multi-country offices present the opportunity to effectively implement programmes that are designed to cover several countries.[28] As previously stated, in 2016 the 10 countries within the Fiji multi-country office had a combined total of core and non-core expenditures of $70 million and the 10 countries covered by the Barbados multi-country office had a combined total of $15 million.

226. **This highlights the need for a common understanding between all development partners that a multi-country office model does not imply that a reduction of physical representation equals a reduction in the engagement of the United Nations development system; that it actually has the ability to provide the best support possible through joint multi-country initiatives that capitalize on the advantages of reach and access and joint resources; and that as communicated by both Governments and the country teams, to do so requires a change in current donor practices, which often support single-country, single-entity projects.** As for all programme countries, especially those with smaller programmes, multi-country offices must be able to benefit from the full capacities of the United Nations system at all levels.

227. On the division of labour among United Nations entities, resident coordinators and Governments responded in a similar manner. **As shown in table 27, the extent to which both Governments and resident coordinators "disagree" on the existence of a clear division of labour among United Nations entities (27 per cent and 35 per cent respectively) is a strong indication of the challenges that exist in terms of overlap of labour within the United Nations development system.**

Table 27
Division of labour (versus overlaps) among United Nations entities

(Percentage)

Question: There is a clear division of labour among the activities of United Nations entities		
	Programme country Governments survey	*Resident coordinator survey*
Strongly agree	5	9
Agree	58	54
Disagree	27	34
Strongly disagree	3	3
Don't know	7	—

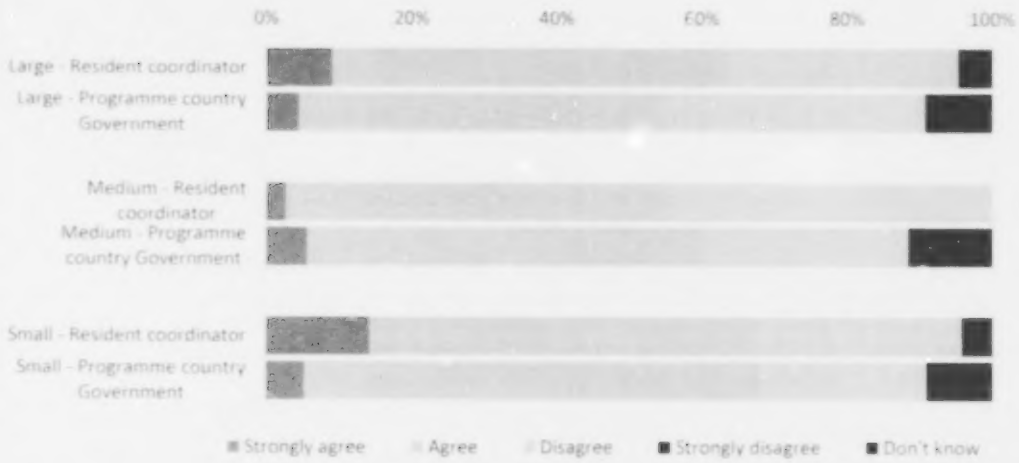
Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs surveys of programme country Governments and resident coordinators.

[28] In 2015, with regard to the Fiji and Samoa multi-country offices, which combined cover 14 countries and territories, 8 out of 15 entities stated that over 75 per cent of their initiatives covered more than one country, and four entities said that about 50 per cent of their initiatives were similarly organized. Twelve agencies cover more than 11 countries, but only four agencies reported a staff presence in more than five countries.

228. Disaggregating the responses by programme expenditure gives rise to additional concerns (see figure XXXVI). Among the 27 countries categorized as having large expenditures, the share of Governments that disagreed with the statement concerning the division of labour was significantly higher than the average; least developed countries and low-income countries also disagreed more than the average.

Figure XXXVI
Opinions of Governments and resident coordinators on the division of labour among United Nations entities

Question: There is a clear division of labour (that is, no duplication or overlaps) among United Nations entities at the country level



Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of programme country Governments and resident coordinators.

Box 4
Obstacles noted by Governments on the lack of a clear division of labour among United Nations entities

- Lack of coordination
- Budget allocation "in silos"
- Individual rather than collective workplans
- Overlapping mandates
- Contradictory instructions to the field from headquarters
- Competition for resources
- Some agencies' presence is not needed

- Inadequate consultations with the Government and lack of coordination within the Government
- Many development challenges are "transversal" in nature

Note: The comments of resident coordinators broadly echoed those of Governments.

B. The resident coordinator function

229. Through General Assembly resolutions 71/243 and 67/226, Member States have called for improvements in the resident coordinator system and the Secretary-General has responded to the 2016 resolution on the quadrennial review by providing a vision for change. The present report simply presents progress in implementation of the remaining mandates of the quadrennial review on the resident coordinator system, including those that remain relevant from 2012.

230. One of the most frequently cited challenges facing the resident coordinator system, including in resolution 71/243, is a lack of authority, capacity and prerogative on behalf of the resident coordinators to effectively lead the country team, in terms of both human and financial resources, and deliver on the UNDAF. This view is shared by resident coordinators and Governments alike.

231. **Resident coordinators consistently report that they have limited capacity and prerogative to avoid duplication of efforts in the country team**, as shown in table 28. Those resident coordinators who mentioned excellent cooperation in the country team generally associated it with personal relations and goodwill than to any institutional requirement. This points to a fundamental gap which needs to be addressed at the system-wide, institutional level, to include clearly defined roles, responsibility and mutual accountability. The perception of Governments of resident coordinators' prerogatives is more positive, as shown in the same table; however, Governments' experience would be limited to "external" manifestations of the resident coordinators' prerogatives, and would thus not be comparable to the resident coordinators' assessment.

Table 28
Resident coordinators' capacity and prerogative

(Percentage)

	Resident coordinator has sufficient capacity	*Resident coordinator has sufficient prerogative*	
	Resident coordinators	*Resident coordinators*	*Governments*
Strongly agree	23	15	27
Agree	37	34	56
Disagree	27	33	8
Strongly disagree	12	16	–
Don't know	1	2	9
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs surveys of programme country Governments and resident coordinators.

232. **Most governments would like to see the resident coordinator play a stronger role** as it would reduce the workload and transaction costs on national partners. To do so, resident coordinators need to be able to make final decisions on strategic objectives in the UNDAF, which 64 per cent of Governments stated was "very important". Furthermore, to improve resident coordinator accountability on United Nations activities in the country, more than half of Governments (56 per cent) indicated that it was "very important" for the United Nations to "consolidate its country presence".

Management and accountability system

233. In 2008, UNDG developed a tool aimed precisely at addressing the concerns of country team members on impartiality, while also bolstering the authority of resident coordinators, namely the management and accountability system. The management and accountability system includes the concept of a "functional firewall" to address impartiality and is based on four key elements, which are shown in table 29.

Table 29
Extent of participation of United Nations agencies in the management and accountability system at the country level, 2017

	The job descriptions of country team members, as heads of agencies, recognize the role of the resident coordinator		*An input from the resident coordinator is required for the performance appraisal of country team members as heads of agencies*		*Agencies recognize an obligation to report to the resident coordinator on programme implementation*		*Agencies recognize an obligation to report to the resident coordinator on resource mobilization activities*	
	Response							
	Number	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
Yes	17	63	12[a]	48	15	58	12	46
No	10	37	13	52	11	42	14	54
Total	**27**	**100**	**25**	**100**	**26**	**100**	**26**	**100**

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs headquarters survey.

[a] Of these 12 agencies, 6 reported that this applies in all programme countries, while the remainder reported that it applies in "most" or "some" countries.

234. **After close to a decade, implementation of the management and accountability system remains partial and with many gaps.** All relevant entities (those that have country offices) have implemented the first element of the system: revising job descriptions. The extent of implementation among the other elements is more variable. Several entities with a substantial field presence mentioned that having an input from the resident coordinator to their country representative's performance appraisal was not universal, while others indicated that agreements existed on the obligation to report to resident coordinators on programme implementation (58 per cent) and on resource mobilization (46 per cent).

235. It is worth highlighting that while the 2015 and the 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs surveys asked resident coordinators about implementation of the management and accountability system, no significant change can be detected during this period (see table 30).

Table 30
Implementation of the management and accountability system at the country level, 2015 and 2017

(Percentage)

	The job descriptions of United Nations country team members, as heads of agencies, recognize the role of the resident coordinator		*The resident coordinator has contributed to the performance appraisal of United Nations country team members in the past 12 months*	
	2017	*2015*	*2017*	*2015*
All agencies	18	29	16	11
Most agencies	20	30	17	19
Some agencies	49	38	53	52
None	13	3	14	18
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

Source: 2015 and 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of resident coordinators.

236. **One set of measures that was put in place to bolster the firewall was for the resident coordinator or resident representative to delegate, as much as possible, the responsibility for UNDP operational activities (see resolution 71/243, para. 57 (c)) and resource mobilization (see resolution 67/226, para. 124 (h)) to the second most senior UNDP staff member in the country.**

237. Table 31 shows that the share of resident coordinators who have delegated authority for resource mobilization is currently 81 per cent, up from 79 per cent in 2015 and 59 per cent in 2014. Moreover, 88 per cent of resident coordinators indicate that they **have delegated responsibility specifically for operational activities**. This demonstrates that, in nearly all countries where there is a suitably senior UNDP staff member, authority has now been delegated from the resident coordinator.

Table 31
Delegation of authority of the resident coordinator, 2014–2017

	The resident coordinator has formally delegated authority for resource mobilization to the second-ranking UNDP official						*The resident coordinator has formally delegated authority for operational activities to the second-ranking UNDP official*	
	2014		*2015*		*2017*		*2017*	
	Number	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
Yes	44	59	91	79	88	81	97	88
No	31	41	24	21	21	19	11	12
Total number of responses	**75**	**100**	**115**	**100**	**109**	**100**	**108**	**100**

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of resident coordinators.

238. **Feedback from United Nations entities, however, indicates that despite various measures to address challenges in the implementation of the functional firewall**, the fact that all resident coordinators are also UNDP resident representatives, and thus are accountable for UNDP business, is seen as a critical

conflict of interest and a major obstacle to giving resident coordinators actual authority over the country teams, programming and other country-level decisions.

239. **In further examining capacity and authority, 79 per cent of resident coordinators indicate that country teams regularly report on programme implementation, while only 28 per cent of resident coordinators receive regular information from country team members on resource mobilization** (see table 32). **This finding underscores Governments' concern about lack of transparency on funding matters.** Moreover, resident coordinators raised concerns on receiving information that is not fully accurate, or in an untimely fashion, including reporting after resources have been obtained.

Table 32
United Nations country team reporting to resident coordinators

The United Nations country team members report regularly to the resident coordinator on:	*Resource mobilization*		*Programme implementation of UNDAF elements led by the agency*	
	Number	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
Strongly agree	5	4	12	11
Agree	26	24	74	68
Disagree	62	57	18	16
Strongly disagree	16	15	5	5
Total	**109**	**100**	**109**	**100**

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of resident coordinators.

240. When asked what measures could improve United Nations relevance to the needs of the country, Governments repeatedly returned to the topic of coherence, calling for the United Nations to strengthen its own coordination and to grant more authority to the resident coordinator.

241. **Finally, the financial support needed for the resident coordinator system to function effectively and deliver the expected results cannot be underestimated. The UNDG cost-sharing agreement for the resident coordinator system continues to have a persistent funding gap.** In 2016, the agreement entered its third year running of funding difficulties. As in 2014 and 2015, this funding shortage was mitigated in 2016 by the deployment of the strategic reserves of the donor-funded United Nations Country Coordination Fund.

C. Integrated support to maximize results

242. In the 2016 quadrennial review, Member States called for the strengthening of the use of the UNDAF as a strategic instrument, while also simplifying the UNDAF processes to reduce fragmentation, overlaps and transaction costs. They also requested that country teams use, where appropriate, the standard operating procedures and business operations strategies. As the evidence presented below suggests, there is a mixed picture in terms of the use of these instruments in countries.

Joint planning

243. **Introduced in 1997 to improve coherence, UNDAFs have become nearly universal, while the number of countries performing a common country analysis**

required as a preliminary analysis for UNDAF development is growing. Among the 110 resident coordinators who responded to the survey, only 5 stated that the country did not have an UNDAF, and these 5 were either in high-income countries or facing major humanitarian challenges. Furthermore, 70 per cent of country teams reported that they had undertaken a common country analysis for the current UNDAF. This figure contrasts with 58 per cent in 2014 and 61 per cent in 2015. This is an important trend, as the common country analysis aims to assist the country team with identifying and targeting those furthest behind.

244. As part of the overall vision for a new generation of country teams, a strategic UNDAF that is better linked to country priorities and that is centred around shared, strategic objectives, is a central element. The surveys provided the opportunity for resident coordinators **to comment on how to improve UNDAF and entity country programming processes**. Among many responses was the recommendation that country team members should consult with each other at the earliest stage of developing their individual country programmes and plans, to identify potential synergies and joint programming opportunities and avoid duplication of efforts. Several resident coordinators called for eliminating country programme documents and using the UNDAF and annual joint workplans in their place, while others recommended that Governments approve joint workplans instead of individual agency country programme documents. **The current time taken to finalize an UNDAF is 14 months on average, a lead time that could be reduced with changes to the processes.**

245. Governments also expressed that United Nations system programming processes could be simplified and harmonized, including as a means to reduce the workload on Governments. Particularly strong support was indicated for single formats for programme workplans and progress reports, as well as for joint monitoring and evaluation and coordinated approaches to capacity-building. For example, 64 per cent of Governments consider that it is "very important" for the United Nations system to use a single format for annual workplans. A further 32 per cent noted that such a measure was "moderately important", as may be seen in figure XXXVII.

Figure XXXVII
Measures towards reducing the workload of national partners

Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2017 survey of programme country Governments.

246. **UNDAF guidelines have been revised throughout the years**, including in a major review in 2006, which proposed, inter alia, a further voluntary strengthening of coordination arrangements at the field level, known as "Delivering as one" (see figure XXXVIII). In 2014, standard operating procedures were introduced as mandatory for "Delivering as one" countries and voluntary for other countries. In early 2017, the common country analysis and UNDAF guidelines were revised to ensure that planning processes are well aligned with the 2030 Agenda and reflect the progress made through the standard operating procedures.

Figure XXXVIII
Core elements of the standard operating procedures

"DELIVERING AS ONE" PILLAR	Core Elements
Overarching	Joint oversight and ownership agreed between Government and the UN and outlined in agreed terms of reference for a Joint National/ UN Steering Committee (Generic terms of reference); Annual reporting on joint UN results in the UN Country Results Report;
One Programme	Signed UNDAF at the outcome level with legal text[9] as appropriate; Joint Work Plans (of Results Groups), aligned with the UNDAF and signed by involved UN entities (this does not preclude agency specific work plans where required) (Tips and template for JWPs); Results Groups (chaired by Heads of Agencies) focused on strategic policy and programme content established and aligned with national coordination mechanisms (Generic Terms of Reference);
Common Budgetary Framework (and One Fund)	A medium-term Common Budgetary Framework aligned to the UNDAF/One Programme as a results-oriented resourcing framework for UN resources (Guide to the Common Budgetary Framework); Annual Common Budgetary Frameworks (as a part of the Joint Work Plans) updated annually with transparent data on financial resources required, available, expected, and to be mobilized (Tools and materials); A Joint Resource Mobilization strategy as appropriate to the country context (with the option of a One Fund duly considered) approved by the UNCT and monitored and reported against in the UN Country Results Report;
One Leader	Strong commitment and incentives of the UNCT to work towards common results and accountability through full implementation of the M&A system and the UNCT Conduct and Working Arrangements; Empowered UNCT to make joint decisions relating to programming activities and financial matters;
Operating as One	Business Operations Strategy[10] endorsed by UNCT is highly recommended, adapted to local needs and capacities, to enhance operational oneness processes through eliminating duplication of common processes to leverage efficiencies and maximize economies of scale; Empowered Operations Management Team (chaired by a Head of Agency); Operations costs and budgets integrated in the overall medium-term Common Budgetary Framework;
Communicating as One	A joint communication strategy appropriate to the country context approved by the UNCT and monitored and reported against in the UN Country Results Report (Guide to Communicating as One); Country Communications Group (chaired by a Head of Agency) and supported by regional and HQ levels, as necessary.

Source: UNDG.

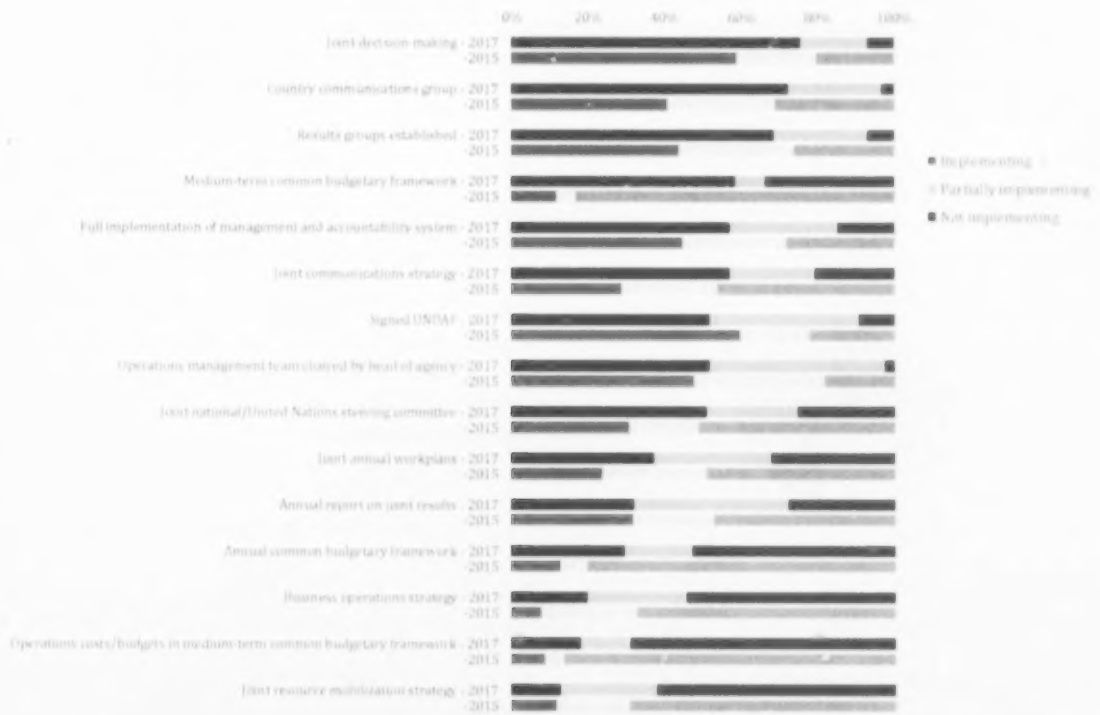
247. **The standard operating procedures are baseline requirements to enable country teams to work better together. As a set of good practices distilled from hands-on experience**, the procedures are aimed at aligning the system-wide United Nations contribution in the country with national development priorities, while also making the United Nations development system more transparent, common-results

oriented and accountable. Recognizing their value to all programme countries, in the 2016 quadrennial review Member States encouraged the progressive implementation of the standard operating procedures and the business operating strategies.

248. **One of the elements of the standard operating procedures, the common budgetary framework, was specifically requested in the 2012 quadrennial review.** Figure XXXIX depicts the extent to which the standard operating procedures had been adopted in 2015 and 2017.

249. Some standard operating procedures are well implemented, namely a signed UNDAF at the outcome level, joint decision-making, country communications groups, joint communications strategies, full implementation of the management and accountability system, results groups and the operations management team being chaired by a head of an agency. However, there has been limited progress where budgeting and harmonization is involved, with the following standard operating procedures needing much improvement: joint resource mobilization strategy, having operational costs included in the common budgetary framework, implementation of business operating strategies and having an annual common budgetary framework.

Figure XXXIX
Implementation of standard operating procedures



Source: UNDG information management system.

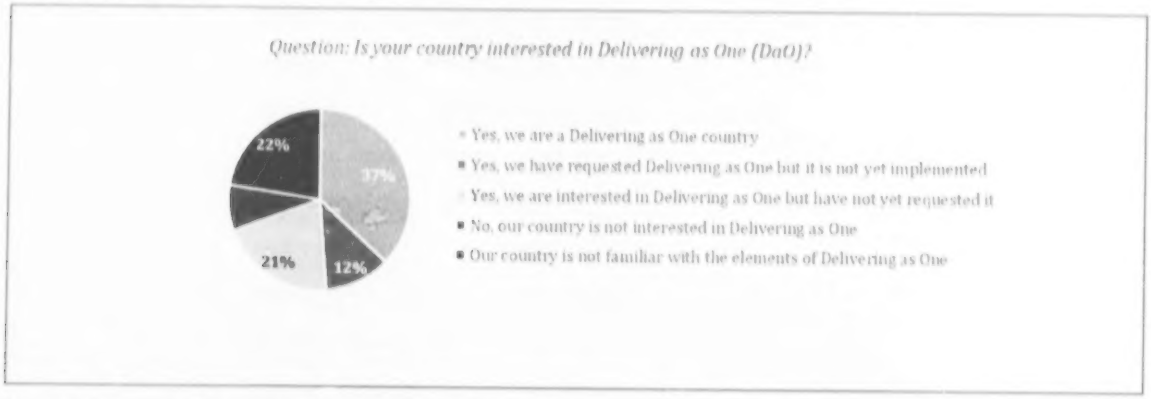
250. Resident coordinators were asked about the information and support received from headquarters, specifically in regard to the standard operating procedures and in particular the business operating strategy. **Most resident coordinators judged support for standard operating procedures and budget operating strategies to have been either "adequate" or "very adequate"**, with only around 10 per cent noting it as "inadequate". More concerns were expressed about support in regard to business operating strategies than to the standard operating procedures in general. A few resident coordinators mentioned a lack of commitment on the part of some entities as a reason for limited progress.

"Delivering as one"

251. The 2016 quadrennial review requests the United Nations development system to enhance its cooperation for development to maximize the "Delivering as one" approach in the countries that choose it, including through lessons learned and by integrating programmatic and operational functions in order to enhance coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and the impact of country-level efforts.

252. **A total of 37 per cent of programme countries have now formally adopted the "Delivering as one" approach, compared with 26 per cent in 2014** (see figure XL). Of the survey respondents, 37 per cent are implementing "Delivering as one", 12 per cent have requested a "Delivering as one" approach and a further 21 per cent have expressed interest in it. Only 8 per cent indicated that they were not interested. Considering that the "Delivering as one" approach has been available to all countries since the 2012 quadrennial review, it seems surprising that a significant share of countries (23 per cent) stated that they were "not familiar with the elements of 'Delivering as one'".

Figure XL
"Delivering as one" status


Question: Is your country interested in Delivering as One (DaO)?
22%
37%
21%
12%
Yes, we are a Delivering as One country
Yes, we have requested Delivering as One but it is not yet implemented
Yes, we are interested in Delivering as One but have not yet requested it
No, our country is not interested in Delivering as One
Our country is not familiar with the elements of Delivering as One

Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2017 survey of programme country Governments.

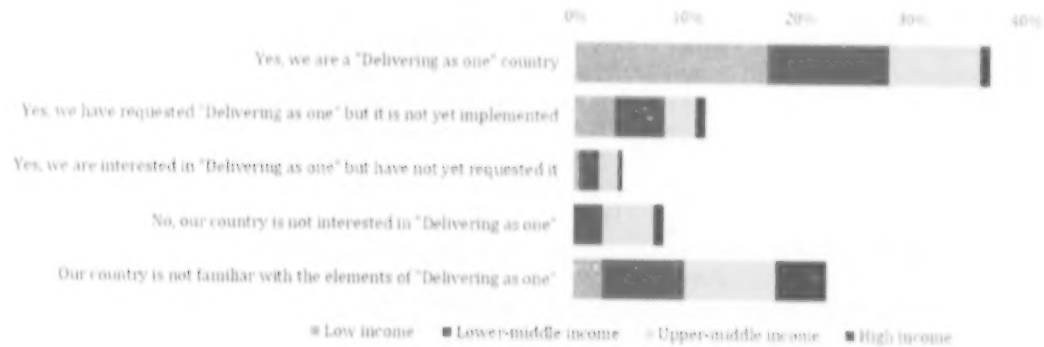
253. **In Governments' views, constraints to the implementation of "Delivering as one" include a lack of commitment from United Nations entities, a lack of alignment with national evaluation systems and misaligned accountability.** Several indicated a perceived lack of commitment to "Delivering as one" on the part of some entities, while others referred to entities not adapting the procedures and to the "vertical accountability" of country team members to their regional heads. The fact that UNDAF reporting was not being aligned with national management and

evaluation systems was also mentioned. When asked how the United Nations could make itself "more effective", several countries urged that "Delivering as one" be more fully implemented. One Government captured a common theme with a call to "deepen the United Nations reforms, so as to create unified country teams, with the capacity to address cross-cutting themes coherently". The breakdown of these responses by country income group reveals that interest in "Delivering as one" is particularly strong in countries with lower income levels.

254. Another significant feature of the responses to this question is the very much larger proportion of low-income countries that are implementing the "Delivering as one" approach, 66 per cent compared with 37 per cent for all countries that answered the survey. Figure XLI shows how many countries are interested in "Delivering as one" and compares responses by country income level.

Figure XLI
Interest in becoming a "Delivering as one" country, by income group

Question: Is your country interested in "Delivering as one"?


0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
Yes, we are a "Delivering as one" country
Yes, we have requested "Delivering as one" but it is not yet implemented
Yes, we are interested in "Delivering as one" but have not yet requested it
No, our country is not interested in "Delivering as one"
Our country is not familiar with the elements of "Delivering as one"
Low income
Lower-middle income
Upper-middle income
High income

Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2017 survey of programme country Governments.

255. Programme countries were asked how satisfied they were with the United Nations system's support for "Delivering as one", both in terms of providing information about it and in supporting progress for its implementation (see table 33). **The United Nations system is yet to fully meet the demands from programme countries on two levels: to facilitate the introduction of "Delivering as one" where countries have expressed interest, and to expand "Delivering as one" in countries that have already adopted it. Unsatisfied countries pointed to a lack of commitment by United Nations entities as a reason for insufficient progress.**

Table 33
United Nations system support for "Delivering as one"

(Percentage)

Extent of satisfaction with the United Nations system's support for "Delivering as one", with reference to:	*The information provided by the resident coordinator and other United Nations officials*	*The progress to date in fully implementing "Delivering as one"*
Very satisfied	4	12
Satisfied	30	60
Dissatisfied	13	23
Very dissatisfied	–	–
Don't know	53[a]	6

[a] Most of these responses were from countries that reported they were not familiar with the elements of "Delivering as one".

Delegation of authority to country-level representatives

256. Progress on delegating authority to country-level representatives has been limited. Among the 11 entities with a presence in at least 50 countries, 6 have delegated authority to all country representatives to commit funding as part of a joint programme, 2 have done so on a country-by-country basis and the remaining 3 have done so up to a pre-defined amount. There has been limited progress on delegated authority for the use of joint workplans and joint reports. With the exception of UNFPA and UNAIDS, only 4 out of these 11 entities delegated authority to use joint workplans and 2 delegated authority to use joint reports.

257. **While variation exists among entities, most resident coordinators perceive heads of entities in the country team to have enough delegated authority.** When asked whether United Nations system field representatives in general enjoy sufficient delegated authority to respond effectively and efficiently to national needs and priorities, 72 per cent of resident coordinators "agreed" and 15 per cent "strongly agreed". There is a great variation among entities, with funds and programmes tending to be decentralized, while specialized agencies tend to remain centralized at the headquarters or regional level. It is important to bring about more consistency, since activities are implemented more efficiently where authority is sufficiently delegated.

258. Since 2014, CEB, through UNDG and the High-level Committee on Management, has been addressing headquarters bottlenecks. In 2016, CEB reported that 30 out of 49 planned actions had been completed by the end of 2015. **New actions towards addressing bottlenecks are taking place, which are expected to result in the adoption of the third revision of the headquarters plan of action.**

Box 5
Draft headquarters plan of action

Based on the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review, and designed as a continual set of headquarters reforms, the third revision of the headquarters measures consists of 36 actions, 18 of which are new. The measures are structured around the following areas (with the figure in parentheses indicating the number of measures):

(a) One programme (4);

(b) One leader (7);

(c) Operating as one (8);

(d) Communicating as one (1);

(e) Joint funding and financing (2);

(f) Coherence across the Charter of the United Nations (2);

(g) Additional measures for future implementation (11).

D. Harmonization and simplification of business practices

259. The 2016 quadrennial review has reiterated the calls contained in the resolution adopted in 2012 for simplification and harmonization of business practices.

260. UNDG and the High-level Committee on Management have aligned their workplans to jointly manage the harmonization agenda for United Nations business practices, as requested in the 2012 quadrennial review. Approximately **half of 29 responding United Nations entities have submitted plans to their respective governing bodies for intra-agency rationalization of business operations**. This is a positive development, with a 20 per cent jump from the last iteration of the headquarters survey in 2015.

261. **The High-level Committee on Management has identified a service provider model and a pricing model for a global service for reference checks and job classifications** and other service provider models are presently under review. Key performance indicators for customer service and service delivery are expected to be ready in 2018.

262. As for the UNDG business operating strategy, more country teams have begun implementing this medium-term planning tool for common operations. The UNDG information management system shows **26 frameworks that are fully compliant with business operating strategies in place, while an additional 34 countries are presently in various stages of developing a business operating strategy**. Last year, UNDG noted 16 completed business operating strategy frameworks and 19 countries in the processing of developing a business operating strategy. Country teams with a signed business operating strategy currently account for 19 per cent of country-level expenditures.

263. The common service lines most frequently included in a business operating strategy are: ICT service solutions (included in 25 out of the 26 country teams that have a fully implemented business operating strategy) and common procurement initiatives (24/26). The four other service lines are less frequently used in business operating strategies: common administration and logistics services (19/26), common finance solutions and common human resources services, each with 18/26 of the business operating strategy frameworks, and common facility services, including common premises, with only 14/26 (see indicator 75 of the monitoring and reporting framework (see annex)). It should be noted that it is always a challenge for operations management teams to quantify cost efficiencies in non-data driven service lines at the beginning of implementation of business operating strategies. However, such efficiencies may become evident at the end of the business cycle.

264. Some resident coordinators indicated that the business operating strategies should be promoted to a much greater extent or even made mandatory, so as to achieve increased economies of scale in transport, travel, procurement, ICT, conference

management and human resources management. Resident coordinators further elaborated that it is challenging to economize in terms of human and financial resources given the lack of incentives to pursue such opportunities.

265. The 2017 survey of operations management teams sought to identify any bottlenecks preventing the implementation of high-quality and efficient operational support services. **Results revealed a trend persisting over the last four iterations of the survey: many operations management teams still lack the resources and capacity to effectively conduct operational analyses.** In terms of the main challenges in establishing a business operating strategy, 65 per cent of the responding operations management teams answered "Conducting the cost-benefit analyses", while 42 per cent chose "Conducting the baseline and needs analyses", and 35 per cent reported "Lack of financial resources" (see table 34).

Table 34
Main challenges when establishing a business operating strategy

Answer choices	*Percentage of responses*
Conducting cost-benefit analyses	65
Conducting baseline and needs analyses	42
Lack of financial resources	35
Developing a results framework	35
Lack of agency commitment	31
Lack of support and guidance from agency headquarters	31
Lack of operations management team capacity	31
Lack of operations management team member commitment	31
Developing a monitoring and evaluation framework	31
Other	27
Lack of delegated authority to operations management team members	15
Developing operations management team workplans	12
Lack of support and guidance from DOCO	4
Lack of United Nations country team support and guidance	–
Lack of resident coordinator support and guidance	–

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of operations management teams.

266. Furthermore, the survey results confirm that **80 per cent of operations management teams still see different policies and procedures, and 75 per cent of United Nations country teams view different rules and regulations, as the largest barrier to harmonizing business practices at the country level. This, however, may be a perceived barrier.** The High-level Committee on Management has already carried out a system-wide harmonization of policies and procedures in various areas of business operations, and when the operations management teams were asked for specific examples of how different rules, regulations, policies and procedures impeded joint business operations, only one of the teams could do so. In short, there seems to be a disconnect between the harmonization efforts done at the corporate level on the one hand, and what staff perceive they can practically implement at the field level on the other hand. UNDG and the High-level Committee on Management are presently working on improving communication to the field.

267. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs surveys of operations management teams between 2013 and 2017 generally show an increase in business operations managed through agency-owned departments, thus, in effect, reversing recent progress. The surveys also indicate that business operations managed by a lead agency are now shifting towards a more fragmented approach in all the areas shown in table 35, except for procurement. This trend could be explained by the possibility that some United Nations entities are consolidating their individual operations services ahead of consolidation of operations across the United Nations development system. The continued perception at the field level that rules, regulations, policies and procedures are not harmonized may also be a contributing factor.

Table 35
Management of business operations functions

(Percentage)

Question: How does the United Nations country team manage the following functional areas of business operations?

	Management through agency-owned departments			*Management through a lead agency*			*Management through a common United Nations service centre*		
Function	*2017*	*2015*	*2013*	*2017*	*2015*	*2013*	*2017*	*2015*	*2013*
Finance	92	91	88	27	25	34	7	8	6
Human resources	95	87	92	24	30	28	5	8	3
Procurement	87	83	87	45	35	41	12	12	9
ICT	84	83	84	33	30	42	16	16	8
Administration and logistics	92	82	88	20	29	36	9	18	12
Facility services[a]	92	–	–	24	–	–	19	–	–

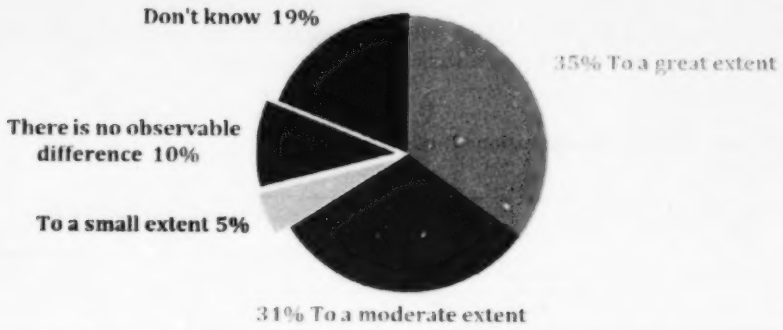
Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of operations management teams.
[a] This business operations area was added in 2017.

268. With the growing number of business operations strategy frameworks, the United Nations development system has made some progress with the consolidation of support services and achieving efficiencies at the country level. However, this headway will not progress further if the communications gap between the harmonization efforts at the corporate level and practical implementation of joint operations in the field is not addressed.

269. Another constraint to collaboration is the differing levels of authority in the country team and operations management team: 66 per cent of the operations management teams found that the levels of authorization varies moderately to greatly among heads of agencies (see figure XLII), and 66 per cent of the teams stated that these varying authorization levels were having a moderate to serious constraint on joint operations.

Figure XLII
Varying delegation of authority among heads of agencies

Question: To what extent does the level of delegated authority enjoyed by agency heads vary from one agency to another?



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2017 survey of operations management teams.

270. **Even though long-term agreements are an important driver in achieving cost savings and efficiency gains in operational support services, most such agreements are not established jointly** (see table 36). Of the operations management team survey respondents, 62 per cent noted that existing long-term agreements were set up to fulfil the requirements of one specific agency. As a result, 24 per cent of the respondents found that these contracts did not meet the needs of their own organization and they therefore could not participate in existing long-term agreements, and 38 per cent of the survey participants stated that United Nations entities cannot piggyback on existing agreements owing to differences in policies and procedures. CEB reported that, in reality, the High-level Committee on Management Procurement Network has removed any obstacles preventing entities from piggybacking off existing long-term agreements, regardless of whether these are agency-specific or jointly established. It may therefore be another example of how harmonization of policies is not efficiently communicated to the field. The rising number of business operating strategy frameworks has the potential to reverse the trend of agency-specific long-term agreements, as business operating strategy implementation creates an environment where these are jointly set up.

Table 36
Factors preventing agencies from utilizing long-term agreements, 2013–2017

(Percentage)

Answer choices	*2017*	*2015*	*2014*	*2013*
United Nations entities continue to establish agency-specific long-term agreements	62	69	54	73
United Nations entities do not permit other entities to utilize their long-term agreements	2	19	8	15
Long-term agreements are not in line with the policies or procedures of all agencies	38	50	46	39

Answer choices	*2017*	*2015*	*2014*	*2013*
United Nations entities do not agree to the service provisions in existing long-term agreements	24	60	8	18
External service providers refuse to include other entities into an existing long-term agreement	6	13	8	9
Other[a]	31	–	–	–

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of operations management teams.

[a] This answer option was added in 2017.

271. The perception that policies, procedures, rules and regulations are not harmonized is also taking its toll on the overall implementation of common services. Recent uptake has been incremental and there is a need for substantial progress if the United Nations development system wants to meet the provisions of resolutions 67/226 and 71/243. UNDG should continue to develop a wide range of operational service solutions that can be adapted to the local context and be readily implemented. In the 2015–2016 biennium, a start was made with standardized common services packages. However, this has been put on hold owing to priorities shifting from practical implementation of business operating strategies towards other initiatives such as "mutual recognition".

272. **The United Nations development system has taken an important step towards further consolidation of operational services in specific locations** with the integrated service centres in Brasilia, Copenhagen, Hanoi and Praia. The Joint Inspection Unit recently undertook a study of the role of these centres in the redesign of administrative service delivery (JIU/REP/2016/11). The Unit found that despite ad hoc cooperation among service centres, there was virtually no systematic inter-agency effort to plan, develop or operate facilities for common benefit or for organizations to draw on the infrastructure and capacities developed by others. This issue has been incorporated into the next strategic plan of the High-level Committee on Management as a matter of priority, and inter-agency collaboration between global service centres has since increased, indicating that some centres are reaching a level of maturity and stability in internal service provision that may lead to opening their availability to other organizations of the United Nations system.

273. Meanwhile, **the UNDG Business Innovations Group has been working for a strategy towards a common back office**. This long-term vision incorporates one global back office where the existing shared service centres provide non-location dependent operational services (also called "vertical integration"), and country-based common back offices support location-dependent functions and processes ("horizontal integration"). This would require that **in addition to mutual recognition of each other's processes, there must be agreement on common operating principles**.

274. Furthermore, **the simplification and harmonization of business practices through the UNDG business operating strategy should continue, as there are many benefits to be gained**: 73 per cent of the responding operations management teams reported enhanced management control of the common operations agenda, 62 per cent reported higher quality services and 58 per cent reported a more consistent approach to common operations (see table 37).

Table 37
Non-monetary benefits of the business operating strategy
(Percentage)

Answer choices	*2017*	*2015*
Enhanced management control of common operations	73	45
Higher quality services[a]	62	–
More consistent approach to common operations	58	58
Enhanced ability to monitor and track impact of common operations	54	48
Enhanced strategic planning	54	34
Better prioritization of human and financial resource expenditures for common operations	38	59
Better linkages between programme and operations	27	48

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of operations management offices.
[a] This answer option was added in 2017 at the request of DOCO.

275. **It is critical that, in response to the quadrennial review and repeated calls from Member States, the United Nations development system commits to a systemic approach to establish common support services at the country level.** The 2017 headquarters survey shows that a mere 50 per cent of the United Nations entities have submitted a plan to their respective governing body for the consolidation of common support services at the country level, and/or have made concrete plans for intra-agency rationalization of business operations.

276. Furthermore, it seems that the **United Nations entities find it challenging to report on the cost efficiencies of business operations**. Only 43 per cent of the responding entities reported on the efficiencies achieved through collaborative procurement. The remaining 57 per cent reported that they were currently leveraging another entity's long-term agreements or have completely outsourced their procurement function to another United Nations organization.

277. Finally, many of the United Nations entities noted that the absence of an agreed methodology on how to quantify cost savings through collaborative procurement (and other operations areas) is preventing adequate reporting on the cost efficiencies of common business practices.

E. Regional dimension

278. Member States have consistently emphasized the importance of the regional dimension in the work of the United Nations development system and, consequently, of coherent and coordinated approaches between different regional actors as a bridge to inform global policies, decisions and other work of the organization, and conversely to help translate these into regionally meaningful guidance.

279. The present report is limited to covering progress on the effectiveness of work at the regional level in terms of the support to and interface with work at the country level. In particular, it focuses on the regional commissions and the two Regional Coordination Mechanisms. The follow-up report of the Secretary-General on repositioning the United Nations development system (A/72/684-E/2018/7) includes proposals for a revamped regional approach to better support countries in their efforts to realize the 2030 Agenda.

280. In comparing the United Nations system with other sources of external assistance for regional or subregional support (see table 11), Governments were more likely to select "multilateral and regional institutions not part of the United Nations" over the United Nations development system. This is the only area of support in which the United Nations system was not chosen as the preferred source, and the second survey year in a row where the United Nations is not in the top ranking in this category. Moreover, support needs to go beyond traditional reporting, as 57 per cent of Governments stated having "received reports or studies" that support them in their mission to implement the 2030 Agenda.

281. **With regard to the regional commissions' support to Governments on regional issues, there is scope for improvement. Roughly half the Governments report that the regional commissions contribute to their country's most pressing regional issues.** Table 38 shows that 7 per cent of Governments considered this support to be "very effective" and 50 per cent to be "effective". However, one third of Governments answered "don't know", and a further 10 per cent reported not receiving any support. Responses from Governments appear more positive than those of resident coordinators (see tables 39 and 40), possibly owing to direct interactions between the regional commissions and national Governments, of which the resident coordinator and the United Nations country team may not be informed.

Table 38
Effectiveness of the contributions of the regional commissions on highest priority regional/subregional issues

Effectiveness of the regional commissions' contribution on the highest priority regional or subregional issues of relevance to the country	*Percentage*
Very effective	7
Effective	50
Ineffective	2
No support received	10
Don't know	32
Total	**100**

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of programme country Governments.

Table 39
Effectiveness of the contributions of the regional commissions on highest priority regional/subregional issues, by region

(Percentage)

	Effectiveness of the regional commissions' contribution on the highest priority regional or subregional issues of relevance to the country				
United Nations Development Group regional groupings	*Very effective*	*Effective*	*Ineffective*	*Received no support*	*Don't know*
Africa — Eastern and Southern	15	45	5	10	25
Africa — Western and Central	5	47	5	11	32
Arab States	–	33	–	27	40
Asia and the Pacific	–	78	–	–	22

Effectiveness of the regional commissions' contribution on the highest priority regional or subregional issues of relevance to the country

United Nations Development Group regional groupings	*Very effective*	*Effective*	*Ineffective*	*Received no support*	*Don't know*
Europe and Central Asia	11	33	–	11	44
Latin America and the Caribbean	12	44	–	8	36

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of programme country Governments.

282. **The response from resident coordinators on the effectiveness of regional commissions on regional and subregional issues of relevance to the country is generally on the less positive side**, with 37 per cent of resident coordinators disagreeing or strongly disagreeing and 17 per cent responding "don't know" (see table 40).

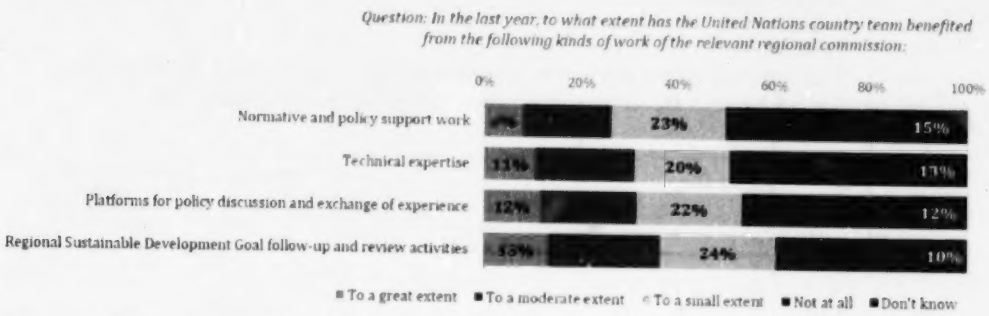
Table 40
Contribution of the regional commissions to regional/subregional issues

Regional commisssions made an effective contribution on the regional or subregional issues of greatest relevance to the country	*Response of resident coordinators (percentage)*
Strongly agree	5
Agree	41
Disagree	25
Strongly disagree	12
Don't know	17
Total	**100**

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of resident coordinators.

283. In addition, **support from the regional commissions to the country-level work of the United Nations development system in four specific areas indicate a perception of limited benefits by the majority of the resident coordinators**, as shown in figure XLIII. These areas are: (a) normative and policy support; (b) technical expertise; (c) platforms for policy discussion and exchange of experience; and (d) regional Sustainable Development Goal follow-up and review activities.

Figure XLIII
Support from the regional commissions to the work of the United Nations country team



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2017 survey of resident coordinators.

284. **A clearer interface is needed between country teams and the regional commissions.** Resident coordinators indicated having relatively little interaction with the regional commissions, which frequently interface directly with the Government. At present, 43 resident coordinators (39 per cent) report that a regional commission participates in country team activities, of which half is participation as a resident agency and the other half as a non-resident agency.

285. There are two regional mechanisms for coordination: the Regional Coordination Mechanisms and the Regional UNDGs.

Box 6
Regional Coordination Mechanisms

In its resolution 1998/46, the Economic and Social Council mandated the regional commissions to hold regular inter-agency meetings in each region, to be chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General, to improve United Nations system coordination. These meetings have been convened by the regional commissions since 1999, focusing on policy and programming issues of a regional nature and guided by regional priorities. In 2006, the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence called for the United Nations regional setting to be reorganized around two interrelated sets of functions:

- The first set, focusing on the analytical and normative work and activities of a transboundary nature, for which the regional commissions would act as a catalyst using, inter alia, their convening power at both the intergovernmental and the secretariat levels, resulted in the Regional Coordination Mechanisms, one for each of the five United Nations regions
- The second set, focusing on coordinating the services of the United Nations country teams, for which UNDP, as manager of the resident coordinator system, is the catalyst, resulted in the Regional UNDGs, of which there are six, two for Africa and one for each of the other regions.

286. Regional UNDGs receive more favourable responses than the regional commissions in terms of support provided to resident coordinators on regional or subregional issues (see table 41). This may be because of the significantly more

operational nature of the Regional UNDGs. Nevertheless, the 2017 survey found that favourability had dropped for both the regional commissions and the Regional UNDGs since 2015.

Table 41
Contribution of the Regional Coordination Mechanisms and the Regional United Nations Development Groups to regional/subregional issues
(Percentage)

Made effective contribution on the regional or subregional issues of greatest relevance to the country	*Regional Coordination Mechanism*		*Regional United Nations Development Group*	
	2015	*2017*	*2015*	*2017*
Strongly agree	19	8	16	8
Agree[a]	54	41	63	68
Disagree[a]	18	26	17	16
Strongly disagree	4	6	2	4
Don't know	5	19	2	4
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of resident coordinators.
[a] The 2015 survey answer choices were "somewhat agree" and "somewhat disagree".

287. In the 2016 quadrennial review Member States called for the full implementation of a statement of collaboration between UNDG and the regional commissions. While entities indicate that the statement is being progressively implemented, a number of commitments in the statement of collaboration remain unfulfilled and the nature of the actions identified as progress do not allow for a quantifiable report on progress.

288. Indicator 69c follows progress on cooperation between the Regional UNDGs and the regional commissions through a proxy that assesses the number of joint regional common position papers advocating on key regional development issues. Feedback from the Regional UNDGs indicates that some regions have put more effort into system-wide collaboration than others. The Regional UNDG and regional commission of the Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States region reported three joint papers on issues related to sustainable development in both 2016 and in 2017; those of the Arab States reported one joint paper.

VI. Enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations development system

A. Managing for results

289. Member States have called on United Nations development system entities to improve reporting on results achieved, including in terms of joint programming. The system-wide strategic document mandated by the quadrennial review is expected to serve this purpose in areas for collective support by the system for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Solid results-based management and reporting, supported by evaluations with a management response, also serve to increase objectivity in the decision-making process. To the extent that lessons are internalized, policy

orientations are more likely to be based on development effectiveness. This cycle can be further reinforced by using country programming processes with clear accountability lines and feedback mechanisms that inform future programming.

Harmonizing and streamlining country programming and reporting

290. A meaningful step towards a programming standard would include harmonizing and streamlining the UNDAF and individual entities' country programming documents.

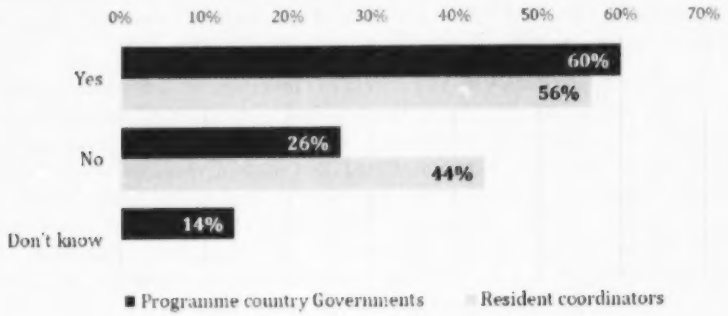
291. As seen in figure XXXVII, 53 per cent of Governments judged that it was "very important" for the United Nations system to simplify the UNDAF and agency country programming or planning processes as a way to reduce the workload on national partners, and a further 43 per cent stated that such a measure was "moderately important". Similarly, 57 per cent of respondents stated it was "very important" for United Nations entities to "rationalize agency-specific country programming and planning processes" and 42 per cent said it was "moderately important". In this context, it is important to ensure that the instruments in each process incorporate the same planned outcomes and lighten the burden on all partners.

292. **The headquarters survey asked whether it was a requirement that the entity's country programme documents demonstrate complete results-chains down from the UNDAF. Encouragingly, 14 entities responded in the affirmative**, including nearly all that use country programmes or engage in substantial country-level programming. Entities are, however, inconsistent in the matter of "copying" outcomes verbatim from the UNDAF to their country programme documents. Although deemed a best practice, and a requirement by some entities, there still seems to be a lack of guidance regarding the exercise. Yet, in the case of UNDP, not only are UNDAF outcomes copied verbatim into country programme documents, but also the outcome indicators in the country programme documents are precisely the UNDAF indicators that UNDP is accountable for monitoring.

293. **Progress is slow around reporting on the results of country teams** (see figure XLIV). It was previously a requirement for all United Nations country teams to provide a report to the Government on results achieved at least once in five years. Since August 2014, the UNDG standard operating procedures have called for an annual report as a core element, and this became mandatory for all countries pursuant to General Assembly resolution 71/243 (para. 50 (f)). In the past year, 56 per cent of resident coordinators reported having provided a report to the Government. That information is corroborated by Governments: 60 per cent indicated that they had received a report from the country team in the past year.

Figure XLIV
Reporting to Governments on the results of United Nations country teams

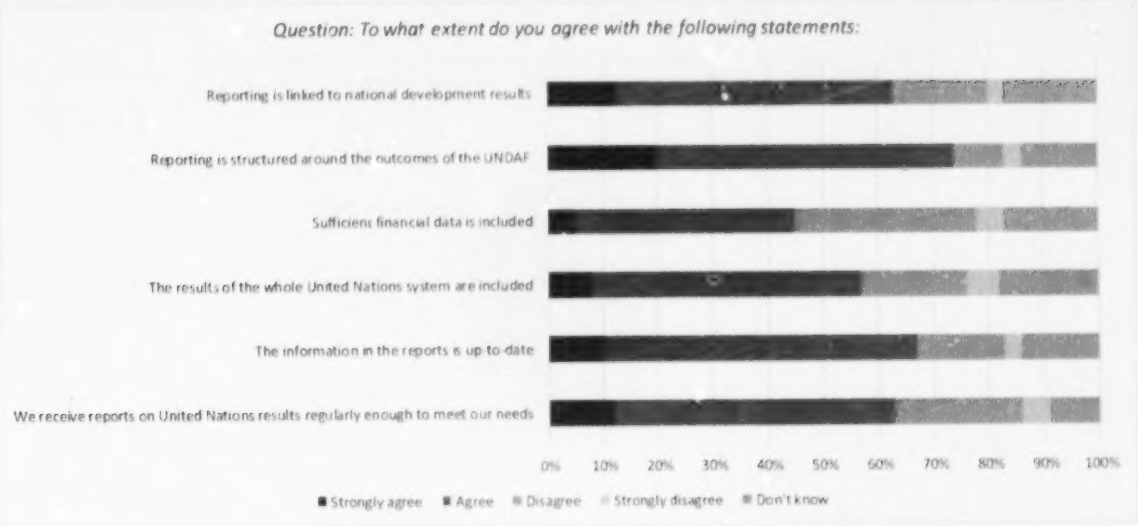
Question: Did your Government receive a report from the United Nations resident coordinator on the results achieved by the United Nations system in your country in the last annual cycle?



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2017 surveys of programme country Governments and resident coordinators.

294. **Concerns also exist around the content and coverage of the reports provided by the country teams** (see figure XLV). A total of 63 per cent of Governments stated that they received reports frequently enough, while 57 per cent noted that United Nations system-wide results were included. Less favourable responses were given on whether sufficient financial data was included, where only 45 per cent agreed. However, a higher percentage (74 per cent) of responses indicated that the report of the United Nations was structured around UNDAF outcomes, while 63 per cent found that reports were linked to national development results. While there is scope to improve in all of these aspects, special attention needs to be given to providing more financial information; to ensuring more complete coverage of the whole United Nations system; and to establishing firmer linkages to national development results.

Figure XLV
Content, timeliness and coverage of reports of United Nations country teams



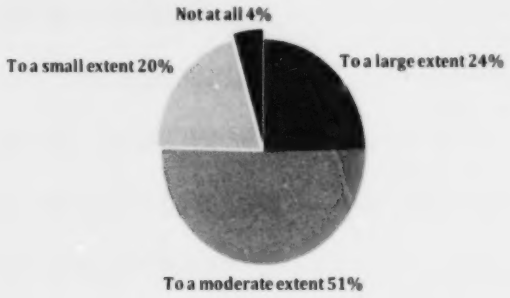
Results-based management

295. In the quadrennial review, Member States underscored the importance of results-based management and requested the United Nations development system to develop common methodologies for planning and reporting on results, improving integrated results and resources frameworks and enhancing a results culture.

296. **Governments were asked whether they had a national results-based management system, to which 62 per cent responded in the affirmative.** The survey also asked about the extent to which the country team had analysed with the Government how results achieved by the United Nations in the country are defined, measured and reported on, with a view to ensuring compatibility between the national and United Nations results-based management systems. Among the 65 countries with a results-based management system, 75 per cent agreed (to a moderate or large extent) that the United Nations is working with them on promoting compatibility of results-based management systems (see figure XLVI).

Figure XLVI
Promoting compatibility of results-based management systems

Question: To what extent has the United Nations country team studied with your Government how results achieved by United Nations development assistance in your country are defined, measured and reported on, with a view to ensuring compatibility between them?

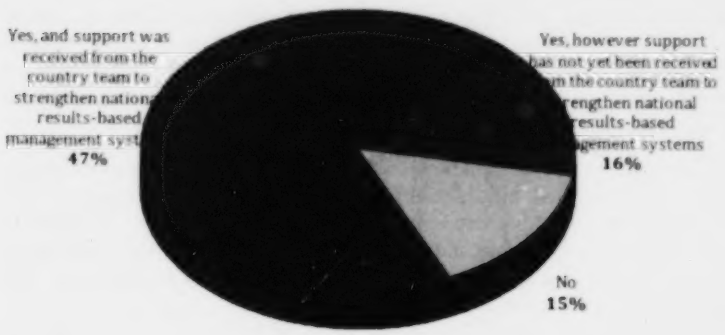


Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2017 survey of programme country Governments.

297. **Governments and resident coordinators were also both asked about receiving and requesting United Nations support in strengthening national results-based management systems** (see figure XLVII). Of the Governments with a results-based management system, 47 per cent expressed having requested supported from the country team to strengthen the system and receiving it, while 16 per cent did not receive support after having requested it. A further 15 per cent did not request support. On the other side, 57 per cent of resident coordinators noted that the system had responded positively after the Government had expressed interest in receiving support from the country team in strengthening its results-based management system, while over a third (36 per cent) indicated that the Government had not expressed an interest. A further 7 per cent noted that the United Nations system had not been able to respond positively after the Government had expressed interest (see figure XLVII).

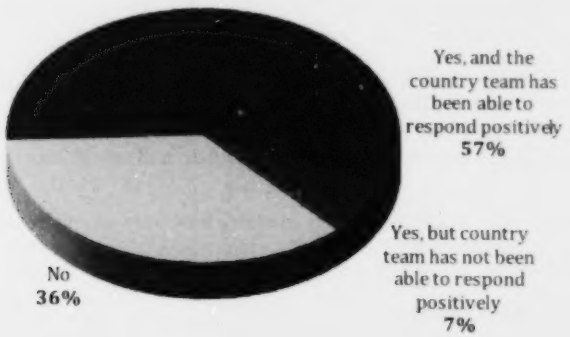
Figure XLVII
Supporting national results-based management systems

Question: Has your Government requested support from the United Nations country team in strengthening national results-based management systems?


Yes, and support was received from the country team to strengthen nationa results-based management syst
47%
Yes, however support has not yet been received m the country team to engthen national results-based gement systems
16%
No
15%

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of programme country Governments.

Question: Has the Government expressed interest in receiving support from the United Nations country team in strengthening national results-based management systems?


Yes, and the country team has been able to respond positively
57%
Yes, but country team has not been able to respond positively
7%
No
36%

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs survey of resident coordinators.

298. **These results suggest that there are a number of countries where the Government has not received an adequate response to requests for support in strengthening national results-based management systems.** Furthermore, several resident coordinators noted that responses to date have been provided by entities individually. Overall, there seems to be scope for country teams to provide more collective support to initiatives related to results-based management, in addition to or in place of responses by individual entities.

Box 7

Results-based management in the United Nations development system

In 2015, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs commissioned an independent analytical study on progress made by the United Nations development system in implementing aspects of the 2012 quadrennial review that related to results-based management. The study found that there was room for further harmonization of results-based management strategies across the United Nations system. The report also found that despite some progress having been made, there was pressure from donors to attribute outcomes to system entities, rather than to report on system-wide results. Key recommendations of the report include:

- The United Nations development system should build on progress made to implement results-based management through developing and sustaining a results culture by extending capacity development beyond those involved in strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation, ensuring reporting systems are aligned to results-based management principles and exploring new and innovative approaches to results-based management
- United Nations country teams should address the gaps in annual reporting on the UNDAF. Annual UNDAF reports should reflect progress made towards attaining UNDAF results based on accurate and reliable information, including information on financial resources
- The 2030 Agenda has implications for how results-based management is conceptualized and implemented by both Governments and the United Nations development system, which will require significant investment in an agreed and coherent system-wide approach to planning, budgeting, managing and reporting on results, including the adoption of shared results and common indicators
- The United Nations development system is uniquely placed to support Governments' efforts towards the development of national results frameworks for the Sustainable Development Goals, strengthening national statistics systems and improving the quality of data and reporting

Source: Report of an independent expert, available from www.un.org/en/ecosoc/qcpr/pdf/sgr2016-studies-rbm-8jan2016.pdf.

Knowledge management

299. A recent Joint Inspection Unit report (JIU/REP/2016/10) stated that **knowledge management remains a challenge for United Nations system organizations; it is not yet a strategic priority, nor are there common practices implemented in a system-wide fashion**. While extensive knowledge management experience exists in the United Nations system, it tends to be confined within individual organizations, even within different parts of a single organization. The report recommends, among other things, that all entities develop policies and strategies towards system-wide knowledge management. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs headquarters survey included several questions on knowledge management (see table 42).

Table 42
United Nations entity responses on knowledge management

Aspects of knowledge management	*Yes*	*No*	*Skipped*	*Total*
Does the strategic plan of your entity include provisions for knowledge management strategies?	22	6	1	**29**
Does your entity use a common authentication system that allows for seamless secure access (e.g. Common Connect)?	15	12	2	**29**
Has your entity taken steps towards sharing its knowledge management strategies with other United Nations entities?	22	7	–	**29**

Source: 2017 Department of Economic and Social Affairs headquarters survey

300. **While most entities have a formal knowledge management strategy, others have a variety of knowledge management policies in place.** Notably, UNICEF stated that it plans to develop a full knowledge management strategy by 2018. Furthermore, UNDP and UNFPA indicated that they are members of the common authentication systems, while other entities explained that they have not experienced a demand for sharing information systems with other entities subscribing to Common Connect. Several entities use the "One United Nations" knowledge exchange network on Yammer, which hosts inter-agency communities of practice under UNDG. Furthermore, to foster peer-to-peer learning and enhance the feedback loop between policy and practice, the UNDG, with support from UNDP, launched an online knowledge-sharing platform. This "One United Nations" knowledge exchange had more than 500 users by the end of 2016, and the Joint Inspection Unit noted it could become the primary system-wide online collaborative platform.

System-wide evaluation

301. **There is scope for action for a more rigorous evaluation of UNDAFs and for improving the management response.**

302. A recent meta-assessment of the UNDAF which examined evaluations conducted during the period 2009–2014, found that **only 37.5 per cent of UNDAFs in operation between 2010 and 2014 had been evaluated**. Among the constraints noted were a lack of resources, overlap with other evaluations and a lack of commitment.

303. The study also found that **only 23 of 36 evaluations were of sufficient quality as to warrant a more in-depth examination of their content**, underscoring the challenge of assessing the extent to which UNDAF evaluations are feeding into organizational learning. A significant weakness in UNDAF processes was a lack of engagement on the part of Governments. The study concluded that **there was a lack of commitment from stakeholders in the UNDAF evaluation process**, highlighted by the low level of compliance with the requirement for an evaluation, the quality standards and issues of coordination and cooperation in the evaluation activities conducted by the United Nations entities at the country level. The report laid out recommendations to increase participation and engagement, sensitize resident coordinators to its importance, improve coordination among entities and update the UNDAF guidance.

304. **Progress is under way in terms of the number of UNDAF evaluations. In the past year, as reported by DOCO, 67 UNDAF evaluations were conducted.**

However, only a third (23 evaluations) were acknowledged through a management response.

305. **The independent review of the system-wide evaluation policy requested in the 2012 quadrennial review was completed in May 2017.** The report concluded that there was strong demand for an effective independent system-wide evaluation function of United Nations operational activities for development. In-depth consideration was given to assigning the system-wide evaluation function to the Joint Inspection Unit, and brief consideration was given to the existing evaluation offices of UNDP or the Office of Internal Oversight Services of the Secretariat or an independent evaluation commissioner reporting to the General Assembly. Rejecting these options as inadequate, the report put forward the option of creating a new independent system-wide evaluation office headed by an Assistant Secretary-General, with nine new staff, requiring some $3.5 million per annum to carry out two independent system-wide evaluations per year. The Secretary-General's proposal to create capacity for system-wide evaluation of performance and results responds to the calls for independent system-wide evaluation with a lighter footprint.

B. Follow-up and monitoring

306. The General Assembly requested analytical reports on results achieved and measures and processes implemented in follow-up to resolution 71/243, to ensure its full implementation. In its resolution 2013/5, the Economic and Social Council requested the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to develop a quadrennial comprehensive policy review monitoring and reporting framework, in consultation with the United Nations development system.

307. The present report and the monitoring framework (see annex) are based on data collected from DOCO, the CEB secretariat, UNDG, the High-level Committee on Management, the International Aid Transparency Initiative, OECD.Stat, the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office, OHCHR, UN-Women, the Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries, UNISDR, the Joint Inspection Unit, the regional commissions, the Regional UNDGs and the four Department of Economic and Social Affairs surveys dedicated to the quadrennial comprehensive policy review. Details on methodology and limitations of the data are contained in each of the survey reports and, where applicable, in the monitoring framework.

308. In collaboration with DOCO and the United Nations development system, the monitoring and reporting framework was substantially revised during 2017 to capture the new mandates contained in resolution 71/243, and to improve the monitoring of ongoing mandates from resolution 67/226. As much as possible, the framework also draws on the UNDG information management system. If available, comparable data from previous years was included in the baseline column.

309. To track progress in a coherent and consistent manner on mandates which are either not reported elsewhere or not reported in a way that enables system-wide tracking, information was gathered through four surveys targeting programme country Governments, resident coordinators, operations management teams and entity headquarters. All four surveys were fully revised to be brought into line with the 2016 resolution on the quadrennial review, including the indicators of the monitoring framework. The four surveys were conducted between July and September 2017.

310. The completion rate for the surveys was exceptionally high: 80 per cent for programme country Governments; 85 per cent for resident coordinators; and 88 per

cent for the operations management teams. Combined, the entities of the United Nations development system that completed the headquarters survey are responsible for 98 per cent of total expenditures on operational activities for development.

VII. Conclusion

311. It has become evident that the three major agreements adopted two years ago imposed very high demands on the system. This has been widely acknowledged, including in the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, which provided guidance on how the system needs to evolve to meet the ambition of the new 2030 Agenda.

312. The United Nations development system has been recalibrating, and the present report offers a base of evidence on the current state of play in response to the quadrennial review mandates for immediate implementation.

313. The analysis suggests that the United Nations development system has taken initial steps to adapt in order to match the ambition of the 2030 Agenda. There is some progress, but results are mixed in relation to delivering, as a system, the kind of integrated and coherent support that the 2030 Agenda demands.

314. The unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals is where the United Nations development system has made the greatest contribution over the past two years. However, the topmost priority areas identified by programme country Governments for United Nations assistance over the coming four years are not among those mentioned more frequently for best performance. Closely related is the feedback from Governments that the United Nations is successful in assisting them to identify those furthest behind and, to a lesser degree, in helping them to actually reach this population. Innovative approaches to reaching those furthest behind first are limited. This speaks to gaps in skills sets, capacities and approaches, and suggests that the full transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals is still to be completed.

315. In terms of key functions of the United Nations development system, evidence shows that the United Nations is effective in developing national capacities, but Governments see the need for more systematic, comprehensive and coordinated approaches to capacity development based on a more thorough analysis and underpinned by strong national ownership. In terms of the provision of high quality, evidence-based and integrated policy advice, evidence shows that the system has not yet shifted from sectoral entity-based approaches, with just 1 in 8 resident coordinators reporting that policy advice is provided in an integrated manner. In terms of partnerships, the system engages, inter alia, through multi-stakeholder partnerships at the global level as well as through numerous entity-specific partnerships at the country level. However, few United Nations entities report tracking the status and results of partnerships, or sharing information and knowledge — a significant gap when the success of the 2030 Agenda relies on finding new ways for all stakeholders to work together to leverage genuine partnerships for sustainable growth.

316. Evidence from both Governments and the United Nations system continues to indicate that the division of labour between entities could be improved and that presence could be better tailored to national needs. There is an urgent need to explore alternative programmatic models at both the country and regional levels for support that is provided in flexible, collaborative ways, takes advantage of advances in ICT and is cost-effective. Tailoring the footprint of the United Nations needs to combine programmatic coherence and accelerated and deeper integration of back-office

functions. This is further confirmed by operations management teams on the ground who also view the benefits of integration going beyond savings, with the provision of better quality services as a key benefit.

317. Resident coordinators have consistently reported that they have limited capacity and prerogative to effectively lead the United Nations country team, including avoiding duplication of efforts, while national partners continue calling on the resident coordinator and the system to reduce transaction costs, in particular those related to multiple planning and reporting processes. Over the past decade, the system has made incremental progress to bolster the authority of the resident coordinator while maintaining impartiality, but there is general recognition that returns on these efforts are diminishing, in addition to the cost-sharing agreement of the resident coordinator system entering its third year of funding difficulties.

318. Underpinning some of the issues above is a funding architecture which continues to be highly earmarked, thus increasing the potential for competition and duplication, and hampering the United Nations development system's ability to work strategically towards collective results. Improvement in the quantity and quality of resources has primarily been on the humanitarian side, while fragmented funding continues to be the norm for development-related activities; and while there has been some strengthening of the transparency and accountability of funding flows, progress has so far been slow.

319. The current report is focused on steps that the system is taking in pursuance of the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review. While doing so, it is clear that longer-term measures for repositioning the United Nations development system are required. The analysis from the present report complements the Secretary-General's reports on repositioning the United Nations development system of July and December 2017.

320. The sum total of the analysis indicates a gradual transition which requires determined action by the system and Member States, guided by a shared vision and commitment to make the United Nations development system more relevant and effective — a United Nations that is evolving to ensure that no one is left behind.

Annex

Quadrennial comprehensive policy review monitoring and reporting framework

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
A.		**Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals**					
1		19		A system-wide outline of present functions and existing capacities of all United Nations entities carrying out operational activities for development, with recommendations, carried out by June 2017 [yes/no — date]	EOSG[3]		Yes (June 2017)
2	a	20		A system-wide strategic document translating the recommendations of the system-wide outline into actions, developed by end 2017 and presented for consideration at the operational activities for development segment of the 2018 session of ECOSOC [yes/no — date]	EOSG[3]		Yes (December 2017 for ECOSOC 2018)
	b			Options for aligning funding modalities with the functions of the United Nations development system, developed by end 2017 and presented for consideration at the operational activities for development segment of the 2018 session of ECOSOC [yes/no — date]			Yes (December 2017 for ECOSOC 2018)
	c			Options for aligning funding modalities with the functions of the United Nations development system reflected in new strategic plans and similar planning documents of its entities (once options presented) [fraction of entities/total entities]	HQ survey[3]		
3		1, 2, 49, 59	5, 7, 12, 113, 115	Percentage of programme country Governments that consider United Nations development system activities are closely aligned with national needs and priorities:	PCG survey[4]	(2015)	
				i. Closely aligned		67%	52%
				ii. Very closely aligned		19%	32%

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source/ responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
4	a	17 (a), 6		Fraction of United Nations development system entities (as applicable[5]) that outline how they will target the furthest behind first:	HQ survey		
				i. In their strategic plan			23/24
				ii. In their annual reporting to their governing body			117/24[6]
	b			Percentage of UNDAFs that outline how they will target reaching the furthest behind first	RC survey[7]		86%
	c			Percentage of programme country Governments that "agree" that the United Nations ensures adequate attention and resources are given to the development needs of the poorest and most vulnerable in society	PCG survey[4]		
				i. Agree			74%
				ii. Strongly agree			17%
	d			Fraction of joint programmes that include addressing inequalities (Sustainable Development Goal 10)	DOCO	36/365 (2016)	39/373
5		17 (b)		*Placeholder for new indicator when UNDG reverts on planned actions to deliver resolution 71/243, para. 17 (b)*			
6		18, 78, 79		Fraction of United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies that identify in their strategic plan specific actions on how they plan to engage in coherent and integrated support, as called for in the 2030 Agenda		HQ survey	26/29
7		16		Fraction of voluntary national reviews by programme countries presented at the high-level political forum on sustainable development that have benefited from the support of United Nations development system entities	PCG survey[7]		35/40
				Number of regional knowledge products produced as part of the regional forums on sustainable development through:	HQ survey		
				i. ECA			127
				ii. ECE			36
				iii. ECLAC			3
				iv. ESCAP			18
				v. ESCWA			–

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source/ responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
				Fraction of United Nations country teams[7] that have assisted Governments in producing a national Sustainable Development Goals report	RC survey		31/34
8	a	8	69–73	Percentage of programme country Governments indicating that poverty eradication is an area where the United Nations development system contribution has been especially significant over the past two years	PCG survey[4]		53%
	b			Fraction of United Nations development system entities (as applicable[5]) that outline in their strategic plan how they plan to mainstream poverty eradication	HQ survey		22/24
	c			Fraction of United Nations development system entities (as applicable[5]) that address the goal of poverty eradication in their strategic plan			24/25
B.	**Alignment of planning processes**						
9	a	48, 50 (f), 21 (c), 22, 49	9, 124, 5, 7, 12, 21, 113, 114, 182	Percentage of United Nations country teams with a:	DOCO		
				i. Joint national United Nations steering committee chaired by the Government		42%	50%
				ii. signed UNDAF at the outcome level with legal text as appropriate or equivalent		38%	50%
				(UNDG standard operating procedures, indicator elements 1 and 2)			
	b			Percentage of programme country Governments that agree that the United Nations development system is "effective" or "very effective" in facilitating in its UNDAF development, the participation of:	PCG survey[4]		
				i. Parliamentarians			55%
				ii. Civil society			85%
				iii. International financial institutions			57%
				iv. Bilateral and multilateral actors			77%
				v. The private sector			52%

Serial number	General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source/responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
	c		Percentage of programme country Governments that "agree"[8] that the United Nations country team engages as much as possible with:			
			i. Parliamentarians			62%
			ii. Civil society			88%
			iii. International financial institutions			68%
			iv. Bilateral and multilateral actors			85%
			v. The private sector			56%
	d		Fraction of joint national steering committees (or similar group) that conducted an annual UNDAF review in the past 12 months	DOCO	45% (2016)	38%
	e		Fraction of most recently completed UNDAFs for which:		(2016)	
			i. An evaluation was conducted		62/131	67/131
			ii. A management response was prepared		23/62	26/67
	f		Average quality criteria score for new UNDAFs:	DOCO desk review (2017)		
			i. Relevance and strategic focus			3.0/5.0
			ii. Principled			3.3/5.0
			iii. Effectiveness			2.6/5.0
			iv. Efficiency			2.6/5.0
			v. Sustainability			2.8/5.0
10		17 (c)	*Placeholder for new indicator when UNDG reverts on planned actions to deliver on paragraph 17 (c) of resolution 71/243*	tbc		
11	a	50 (b), 62	Percentage of programme country Governments that "agree" that there is an improved focus on common results among United Nations development system entities at the country level in the past year	PCG survey[4]		
			i. Agree			69%
			ii. Strongly agree			16%

Serial number	General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
	b		Percentage of resident coordinators who "agree" that there is an improved focus on common results among United Nations development system entities at the country level in the last year:	RC survey		
			i. Agree			76%
			ii. Strongly agree			19%
	c		Percentage of United Nations country teams with results groups aligned with national coordination mechanisms	DOCO	53%	69%
			(UNDG standard operating procedures, indicator element 5)			
	d		Percentage of United Nations country teams with joint workplans (of results groups) that are aligned with the UNDAF and signed by all involved entities (UNDG standard operating procedures indicator element 4)		24%	36%
C.	**Funding**					
I.	**Overview and trends**					
12	a	25, 7, 26, 27	24, 26, 29	Funding for operational activities for development:	DESA	(2015)	
				i. Total		$27.4 billion	$29.5 billion
				ii. Core		$6.1 billion	$6.4 billion
				iii. Percentage of core share		22.4%	21.9%
	b			Percentage of core share of funding for development-related activities from Governments (excluding local resources)		(2015) 42%	43%
	c			Percentage of programme countries indicating that **core** funds are "closely aligned" with the country's development needs and priorities:	PCG survey[4]	(2015)	
				i. Closely aligned		55%	56%
				ii. Very closely aligned		15%	10%

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
	d			**Percentage of programme countries indicating that non-core funds are "closely aligned" with the country's development needs and priorities:**		(2015)	
				i. Closely aligned		45%	50%
				ii. Very closely aligned		8%	7%
	e			**Percentage of UNDAFs aligned with the national planning and budgeting cycles of programme countries:**	RC survey[7]	(2015)	
				i. Aligned		66%	62%
				ii. Planning to align in the next cycle		21%	16%
13		28		**Number of Member States providing at least 0.7% of GNI to ODA**	OECD.Stat	(2015)	
						6	8
14		7	11, 24	**Percentage share of funding for United Nations operational activities for development relative to:**	DESA + OECD database	(2015)	
				i. Total ODA		20.0%	19.7%
				ii. Total multilateral ODA		31.3%	32.8%
15	a	33, 25, 36, 39, 50g	118, 124 (g), 135, 141, 27, 28, 44	**Total contributions to inter-agency pooled funds**	MPTF Office	(2015)	
				i. Country pooled funds		$924 million	$1,100 million
				ii. Global/regional pooled funds		$611 million	$589 million
	b			**Percentage of programme countries where:**	DESA + MPTF Office	(2015)	
				i. Over 10%		24.8%	29.8%
				ii. Over 15%		14.8%	20.5%
				iii. Over 20%		10.7%	12.6%
				of non-core resources are channelled through inter-agency pooled funds			

Serial number	General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
c			**Number of Member States that contribute:**		**(2015)**	
			i. Over 10%		**15**	**17**
			ii. Over 15%		**13**	**14**
			iii. Over 20%		**10**	**12**
			of their United Nations non-core contributions through inter-agency pooled funds			
d			**Fraction of United Nations development system entities that receive:**		**(2015)**	
			i. Over 10%		**5**	**4**
			ii. Over 15%		**3**	**2**
			iii. Over 20%		**2**	**2**
			of their non-core resources from inter-agency pooled funds			
e			**Percentage of non-core resources for:**	**DESA**	**(2015)**	
			i. Development-related activities		**6.4%**	**4.5%**
			ii. Humanitarian assistance-related activities		**10.1%**	**10.3%**
			channelled through inter-agency pooled funds			
f			**Funding channelled to thematic funds**		**(2015)**	
			i. Total		**$529 million**	**$407 million**
			ii. Percentage of total non-core funding		**2.6%**	**1.7%**
g			**Fraction of United Nations development system entities with more than 20% of total programme expenditures constituting part of a joint programme**	**HQ survey**		**6/24**

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
16		32		Median UNDAF fulfilment (i.e. actual development-related country-level expenditures as percentage share of UNDAF indicative budget), disaggregated cumulatively by year	DOCO for indicative budget		
				i. Year 1	DESA for fulfilment		18%
				ii. Year 2			46%
				iii. Year 3			57%
				iv. Year 4			93%
				v. Year 5			129%
17		34 (a), 31, 32	33	Fraction of United Nations development system entities indicating that at least 50% of their contributions are part of multi-year commitments	HQ survey		
				i. All entities			12/25[9]
				ii. Funds and programmes			1/6
				iii. Specialized agencies			5/8
				iv. Other entities			6/11
18	a	34 (c), 37	24, 33, 77, 35	Funding from programme countries:	DESA	(2015)	
				i. Core		$467 million	$494 million
				ii. Non-core (excluding local resources)		$1,081 million	$888 million
				iii. Local resources		$1,406 million	$1,920 million
	b			Total funding received from non-State partners		(2015)	
				i. Core		$662 million	$808 million
				ii. Non-core		$3,242 million	$3,234 million
	c			Percentage share of total funding coming from non-State partners		(2015)	
						14.6%	13.7%

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
	d			Fraction of United Nations development system entities reporting annually to their governing bodies on concrete measures to broaden the donor base	HQ survey	(2015) 23/25	215/20
19		43	46	Fraction of United Nations development system entities, that in their respective governing bodies:	HQ survey	(2015)	
				i. Held structured dialogues in the past year on how to finance the development results agreed in the new strategic planning cycle		17/25	17/27
				ii. Presented options for improving the functioning and effectiveness of the structured financing dialogues		=	9/27
20	a	38		Fraction United Nations development system entities reporting resources generated from "innovative funding modalities" as part of their regular financial reporting	HQ survey		13/27
	b	38		Fraction of United Nations development system entities that have included information about knowledge sharing and best practices on innovative funding as part of their regular financial reporting			10/27
21	a	39, 62	42	Percentage of United Nations country teams with a joint resource mobilization strategy that is approved by the country team and is monitored and reported against the United Nations country results report (Standard operating procedures indicator element 8)	DOCO	13%	13%
	b			Percentage of United Nations country teams that have a common budgetary framework that is:			
				i. Medium-term and aligned to the UNDAF		37%	57%
				ii. Updated annually (i.e. annual common budgetary framework)		19%	28%
				(Standard operating procedures indicator elements 6 and 7)			
	c			Percentage of United Nations country teams[7] that have mapped overall financing flows of the country (i.e. public, private, domestic and international) as part of the support to the national Government in delivering the Sustainable Development Goals.	RC survey		10%

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source/ responsibility[12]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
22		63		Median change (percentage) in country-level development-related expenditure after requesting "Delivering as one" (based on average expenditure in 3 years before and after)[10]	DESA		19.6% increase
II.	**Implementation of full cost recovery**						
23	a		47, 53, 43, 48, 51, 54	Fraction of United Nations development system entities that have adopted harmonized cost-recovery frameworks	HQ survey	17/25 (2015)	19/29
	b			Percentage of total expenditures directed to programme activities		(2015)	
				i. Core		68%	65%
				ii. Non-core		92%	89%
	c			Fraction of United Nations development system entities that report annually on the implementation of their approved cost-recovery policies and rates to their respective governing body		17/29[11] (2015)	15/29
24	a	34 (b), 29, 25, 43	41	Fraction of United Nations development system entities consolidating all projected core and non-core resources within an integrated results and resources framework	HQ survey		27/29
	b			Median percentage fulfilment of integrated budgets of United Nations development system entities (actual versus indicative)			96%
III.	**Enhancing transparency and accountability of funding flows**						
25		30, 47, 50 (h), 69, 70		Fraction of United Nations development system entities publishing data in accordance with the International Aid Transparency Initiative data standard:	IATI website		
				i. All entities		10/39	14/39
				ii. Funds and programmes		5/9	6/9
				iii. Specialized agencies		3/13	5/13
				iv. Other entities		2/17	3/17

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
26	a	29	38, 39	Fraction of United Nations development system entities that have defined common principles for the concept of "critical mass" of core resources:	HQ survey		
				i. All entities		–	12/29
				ii. Funds and programmes		7/12 (2015)	5/9
				iii. Specialized agencies		–	2/8
				iv. Other entities		–	5/12
	b			Fraction of United Nations development system entities that have determined and reported on their level of "critical mass" of core funding:			
				i. All entities			8/29
				ii. Funds and programmes			2/9
				iii. Specialized agencies			2/8
				iv. Other entities			4/12
D.	**Functions**						
I.	**Functions and comparative advantages**						
27		21	57–63	Percentage of programme country Governments that "agree" that United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies have been effective in developing national capacities:	PCG survey[4]		
				i. Agree			71%
				ii. Strongly agree			18%
28	a	21a		Fraction of programme country Governments that "agree" that the United Nations development system provides **evidence-based** policy advice tailored to national needs and priorities:	PCG survey[4]		
				i. Agree			68%
				ii. Strongly agree			25%

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source/ responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
	b			Fraction of programme country Governments that "agree" that the United Nations development system provides **integrated (where appropriate)** policy advice tailored to national needs and priorities:			
				i. Agree			62%
				ii. Strongly agree			17%
	c			Percentage of resident coordinators stating that the United Nations country team generally provides policy advice that is developed through a:	RC survey		
				i. Single-entity process			21%
				ii. Coordinated process			66%
				iii. Integrated process			13%
	d			Fraction of United Nations country teams that have supported Governments:	DOCO		
				i. To mainstream the Sustainable Development Goals into the national development plans			77/114
				ii. On Sustainable Development Goal measurement and reporting			66/114
				iii. With general orientation on Sustainable Development Goals			75/114
				iv. With requests on specific Sustainable Development Goals			21/114
				(of those country teams that have had support requested from them)			
29	a	15, 21 (b)	58	Percentage of United Nations country teams that have in the past year:	DOCO and OHCHR	(2016)	
				i. Completed a human rights analysis		61/131	61/131
				ii. Developed a strategy and taken subsequent action to address the issues set out in the human rights analysis		36/61	36/61

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
	b			Percentage of United Nations country teams that have in the past year:		(2016)	
				i. Supported the Government to develop a report for the universal periodic review		63%	63%
				ii. Facilitated follow-up of the universal periodic review recommendations by the Government		92%	50%
				iii. Supported the Government to develop a report for the human rights treaty bodies		62%	60%
				iv. Facilitated follow-up of the treaty body recommendations by the Government		74%	75%
				v. Supported the Government in preparing for visits of special procedures mechanisms		45%	50%
				vi. Facilitated follow-up of special procedures mechanisms' recommendations by the Government		44%	50%
	c			Percentage of United Nations country teams that have drawn on human rights recommendations, either of:	DOCO	(2016)	
				i. Universal periodic review		66%	55%
				ii. Human rights treaty bodies, or		75%	78%
				iii. Special procedures mechanisms		34%	39%
				to inform United Nations analysis, programming or advocacy strategies			
30	a	21 (c), 50 (h)	23, 58	Percentage of programme countries that "agree"[8] that the United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies have contributed to the strengthening of national capacities in:	PCG survey[4]		
				i. Planning			89%
				ii. Management			76%
				iii. Evaluation			75%
				iv. Statistics			80%

Serial number	General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source/ responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
b			Percentage of resident coordinators that "agree"[8] that United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies have contributed to the strengthening of national capacities in:	RC survey		
			i. Planning			98%
			ii. Management			90%
			iii. Evaluation			84%
			iv. Statistics			96%
c			Fraction of United Nations country teams that:	DOCO	(2016)	
			i. Provide support to national statistical capacity		125/131	127/131
			ii. Provide this support through an inter-agency effort		77/125	78/127
d			Percentage of United Nations country teams[7] that state they have access to "adequate" official government data on:	RC survey		
			i. Income level			60%
			ii. Sex			59%
			iii. Age			61%
			iv. Disability			28%
			v. Ethnicity			32%
			vi. Religion			43%
			vii. Race			30%
e			Fraction of United Nations development system entities that have implemented a common approach to strengthening of country-level data and statistics (once developed)	HQ survey		Not yet developed

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
31	a	50 (h), 21 (c), 47, 69, 70, 71		Percentage of programme country Governments that state that the United Nations works "more closely" together to support capacity-building on disaggregated data collection and analysis compared with four years ago:	PCG survey[4]		
				i. More closely			48%
				ii. Much more closely			18%
	b			Percentage of residential coordinators indicating that United Nations development system entities work "more closely" together on support for capacity-building on disaggregated data collection and analysis compared with four years earlier:	RC survey		
				i. More closely			59%
				ii. Much more closely			19%
	c			Percentage of United Nations country teams that participate in the Government's formal mechanisms to coordinate statistical development efforts with development partners (of those Governments that have such mechanisms according to the country team):	DOCO	53% (2016)	57%
32		23		Percentage of UNDAFs that substantively address the needs of persons with disabilities	RC survey[7]		65%
33	a	22, 30, 38, 39, 40, 49	20, 57	Percentage of programme country Governments that "agree" that the United Nations development system plays a catalytic role in facilitating partnerships:	PCG survey[4]		
				i. Agree			69%
				ii. Strongly agree			18%
	b			Percentage of programme country Governments that stated that the United Nations development system has contributed to building the capacity of the country to engage in partnerships"			
				i. To a moderate extent			53%
				ii. To a large extent			26%

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source/ responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
	c			Fraction of United Nations development system entities that have in place a functioning monitoring and reporting partnership platform or mechanisms that track annually the status and results of each partnership	HQ survey		21/29
II.	**Support to least developed countries and other countries in special situations**						
34	a	28, 10, 40, 11	10, 11, 13, 19, 30	Number of Member States providing at least	OECD.Stat	(2014)	(2015)
				i. 0.15%		8	7
				ii. 0.20%		6	5
				of GNI to ODA to least developed countries			
	b			Percentage share of **total** country-level programme expenditures spent in[1,2]	DESA	(2015)	
				i. Least developed countries		47.2%	46.2%
				ii. Landlocked developing countries		24.2%	24.3%
				iii. Middle-income countries		58.0%	58.8%
				iv. Small island developing States		2.7%	2.6%
				v. Africa		45.8%	44.2%
				vi. Countries with a humanitarian response plan		48.3%	50.7%
	c			Percentage share of **core** country-level programme expenditures spent in:		(2015)	
				i. Least developed countries		38.5%	41.3%
				ii. Landlocked developing countries		20.3%	21.8%
				iii. Middle-income countries		63.2%	63.6%
				iv. Small island developing States		3.8%	3.7%
				v. Africa		40.3%	44.8%
				vi. Countries with a humanitarian response plan		40.4%	42.8%

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
35	a	41		Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries operationalized (yes/no)	Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries		Yes [22 Sept. 2017]
	b			Annual contributions provided to Technology Bank			$2.45 million[13]
36		40		Fraction of programme country Governments of recently graduated and scheduled to graduate from least developed country status that "agree" that the United Nations development system has provided effective support in the formulation of their national transition strategies:	PCG survey[4]		
				i. Agree			3/6
				ii. Strongly agree			2/6
III.		**Providing greater complementarity among humanitarian, development and sustaining peace efforts**					
37	a	14, 24	97, 106	Total number of:[14]	DOCO (ii–iv)	(2016)	
				i. Special representatives of the Secretary-General		Unavailable	11
				ii. Deputy special representatives of the Secretary-General/resident coordinators/humanitarian coordinators/resident representatives		12	11
				iii. Resident coordinators/humanitarian coordinators/resident representatives		16	18
				iv. Resident coordinators/resident representatives		89	88
				v. Humanitarian coordinators		Unavailable	1
	b			Fraction of programme country Governments that state there is "close collaboration" among United Nations development system entities engaged across development, disaster risk reduction, humanitarian action and sustaining peace (as applicable[5]):	PCG survey[4]		
				i. Close collaboration			20/109
				ii. Very close collaboration			76/109

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
	c			Fraction of resident coordinators that state there is "close collaboration" among United Nations development system entities engaged across development, disaster risk reduction, humanitarian action and sustaining peace (as applicable[5]):	RC survey		
				i. Close collaboration			28/109
				ii. Very close collaboration			56/109
38	a	24, 24 (a), 24 (b), 56	106, 107, 102	*Placeholder for new indicator when UNDG reverts on planned actions to deliver these mandates*	tbc		
	b			Fraction of United Nations country teams that provide:	DOCO		
				i. Support to national disaster risk reduction efforts		116/131	117/131
				ii. Support for disaster risk reduction in an inter-agency effort		94/116	98/117
	c			Fraction of United Nations country team that participate in the Government's formal mechanism that coordinates disaster risk reduction efforts with development partners		95% (2016)	93%
	d			Fraction of United Nations country teams[7] in countries (as applicable[5]) with humanitarian assistance needs where humanitarian and development actors have in the last two years engaged in:	RC survey		
				i. Joint needs assessments			74/85
				ii. Joined up planning			68/83
				iii. Joint monitoring and evaluation on progress on collective outcomes			52/74
	e			Fraction of United Nations country teams[7] in countries (as applicable[5]) in conflict or post-conflict situations with an institutionalized and country-led national mechanism to coordinate development and peacebuilding efforts that are supported by the country team	RC survey[7]		46/53

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
	f			Fraction of United Nations country teams[7] in countries (as applicable[5]) where United Nations humanitarian and development activities are based on:[15]	RC survey		
				i. Collective and/or complementary results or outcomes			46/91
				ii. Joint or joined-up analysis			44/92
				iii. Joined-up planning			41/92
				iv. Joint coordination mechanisms			40/90
39		56, 24 (a)	104, 105	Fraction of United Nations missions that have:	RC survey		
				i. A multi-year joint (mission-country team) strategy that includes coordination and division of labour throughout the lifecycle of a mission, including initial planning and strategic assessments			–[16]
				ii. A joint plan for draw down and/or withdrawal of the mission			2/25
40	a	56, 24	93, 94	Fraction of UNDAFs that substantively address:	RC survey		
				i. Disaster and climate risk reduction			94/106
				ii. The drivers of needs, risks and vulnerability			95/107
				iii. Sustaining peace action (as applicable[5])			48/62
	b	24	93, 94, 108–110	Percentage of programme country Governments that report biennially on progress on disaster risk reduction	UNISDR[4]	74% (2015)	–[17]
IV.	**Cross-cutting dimensions**						
41	a	13, 72, 73	87, 81, 82, 83, 85, 86, 89, 88, 91, 92	System-wide evaluation of the effectiveness, value added and impact of the System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women completed	JIU[3]	Deferred (2015)	No
	b			Fraction of United Nations development system entities that meet or exceed all minimum standards in the System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women	UN-Women	0/41 (2015)	1/41

Serial number	General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
c			Fraction of United Nations country teams that have conducted at least one gender scorecard exercise in the past four years		19/131 (2015)	35/131
d			Fraction of United Nations country teams that have conducted a gender scorecard exercise in the past four years, and met or exceeded requirements in at least half of the performance indicators		3/19 (2015)	9/35
e			Fraction of United Nations development system entities that track and report on allocations and expenditures using gender markers		15/41 (2015)	19/41
f			UNDAF gender marker methodology piloted (once developed)	UN-Women[3]	–	No
g			Percentage of UNDAFs that feature gender results at the outcome level	UN-Women	61% (2015)	62%
h			Percentage of female staff among,[18]	CEB		
			(a) International Professional staff			
			i. P-1			65.5%
			ii. P-2			59.4%
			iii. P-3			47.6%
			iv. P-4			44.2%
			v. P-5			38.1%
			(b) National staff			
			i. National Officer-A			50.3%
			ii. National Officer-B			45.3%
			iii. National Officer-C			46.3%
			iv. National Officer-D			44.7%
			v. National Officer-E			33.3%

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018	
				(c) High-level posts				
				i. D-1			34.7%	
				ii. D-2			33.7%	
				iii. ASG			29.4%	
				iv. USG			28.6%	
				(d) General Service staff				
				i. G-2			3.7%	
				ii. G-3			22.9%	
				iii. G-4			58.2%	
				iv. G-5			68.2%	
				v. G-6			62.6%	
				vi. G-7			60.2%	
	i			Fraction of United Nations development system entities that have high-level posts (D-1 and above) filled by nationals of programme countries, disaggregated by gender:[19]	HLCM			
							F	*M*
				– Less than 25%			16/39	6/39
				– Between 25% and 50%			14/39	22/39
				– More than 50%			9/39	11/39
42	a	23, 21 (e)	74, 77	Fraction of United Nations development system entities that integrate South-South cooperation into their strategic plan	HQ survey		25/29	
	b			Fraction of United Nations development system entities that actively report on South-South Cooperation in their annual reports			21/29	
	c			Percentage of UNDAFs that substantively address South-South and triangular cooperation	RC survey	43% (2016)	56%	

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source/ responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
	d			Percentage of programme country Governments indicating that the United Nations has undertaken activities in that country to support South-South or triangular cooperation	PCG survey[4]		67/119
	e			Percentage of programme country Governments indicating the United Nations development system is a preferred partner for supporting South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation			55%
E. Functioning							
I. System-wide accountability and coordination							
43		45		Report of the Secretary-General on improving the accountability and overall coordination of the entities of the United Nations development system and their oversight by Member States:	EOSG		
				i. Presented to ECOSOC for its consideration by end June 2017 (yes/no — date)			Yes — Jun 2017
				ii. Presented to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session for review and further action [yes/no — date]			Yes — Oct 2017
II. Flexible, cost-effective and collaborative models for field presence							
44	a	50b, 68, 61, 17 (c) 64, 50, 50 (b), 68	115, 117, 120,	Percentage of programme country Governments that "agree"[3] that:	PCG survey[4]		
				i. The United Nations development system presence is adequately tailored for meeting the specific challenges of the country			86%
				ii. There is a clear division of labour among United Nations development system entities at the country level			63%

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
	b			Percentage of resident coordinators who "agree"[8] that:	RC survey		
				i. The United Nations development system presence is adequately tailored for meeting the specific challenges of the country			75%
				ii. There is a clear division of labour among United Nations development system entities at the country level			63%
	c			Percentage of programme country Governments that "agree"[8] that the United Nations development system presence:	PCG survey[4]		
				i. Is flexible			86%
				ii. Is cost effective			67%
				iii. Operates collaboratively			86%
	d			Percentage of resident coordinators who "agree"[8] that the United Nations development system presence:	RC survey		
				i. Is flexible			70%
				ii. Is cost effective			56%
				iii. Operates collaboratively			89%
45	a	50c, 57 (f), 50, 67, 74	18, 116	Percentage of programme country Governments that find it "easy" to access technical expertise from across the United Nations system:	PCG survey[4]		65%
				i. Easy			5%
				ii. Very easy			
	b			Average number of Resident Coordinator Office staff per country (not including the resident coordinator), by programme country expenditure:[20,21]	DOCO		
						(2016)	
				i. All		1.6	1.7
				ii. Large		2.0	2.1
				iii. Medium		1.7	1.8
				iv. Small		1.4	1.4

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source/responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
46	a	68, 64, 50 (d), 50 (e), 50 (f), 51, 52, 61, 62, 66	18, 116	Average number of resident United Nations country team members in countries disaggregated by programme country expenditure:[21]	DOCO		
				i. All		12.0	12.8
				ii. Large		16.4	17.5
				iii. Medium		13.4	14.4
				iv. Small		9.0	9.6
	b			Average number of single-entity office premises per country, by programme country expenditure:[21,22]	DOCO[23]		
				i. All			16.1
				ii. Large			34.3
				iii. Medium			22.3
				iv. Small			5.7
	c			Average number of common premises[24] per country, by programme country expenditure:[21]	DOCO		
				i. All			3.0
				ii. Large			7.2
				iii. Medium			4.0
				iv. Small			1.0
	d			Average number of United Nations development system entities in each common premise, by programme country expenditure:[21,25]	DOCO		
				i. All			4.1
				ii. Large			3.7
				iii. Medium			3.9
				iv. Small			5.9

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[12]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
	e			Fraction of United Nations country teams with a United Nations House,[26] by programme country expenditure:[21]	TTCP		
				i. All			62/131
				ii. Large			6/27
				iii. Medium			11/45
				iv. Small			40/59
	f			Average number of entities per United Nations house, by programme country expenditure:[21]	DOCO		N/A[27]
				i. All			
				ii. Large			
				iii. Medium			
				iv. Small			
47	a	50 (i), 21	64, 66	Percentage of programme country Governments that "agree" that the United Nations development system uses national systems wherever possible:	PCG survey[4]	(2015)[28]	
				i. Agree		45%	59%
				ii. Strongly agree		22%	19%
	b			Percentage of resident coordinators who "agree" that the United Nations development system is using parallel implementation units as little as possible:	RC survey	(2015)	
				i. Agree		37%	52%
				ii. Strongly agree		25%	18%

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source/ responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
III.		**Resident coordinator system**					
48		54, 55		Percentage of programme country Governments that "agree" that the resident coordinator effectively and efficiently leads and coordinates the United Nations country team strategic support for national plans and priorities:	PCG survey[4]		
				i. Agree			62%
				ii. Strongly agree			30%
49	a	55		Percentage of programme country Governments that "agree" that the resident coordinator has sufficient prerogative to effectively fulfil her/his mandate:			
				i. Agree			56%
				ii. Strongly agree			27%
	b			Percentage of programme country Governments that state the resident coordinator has demonstrated **impartiality**:			
				i. Effectively			54%
				ii. Very effectively			34%
	c			Percentage of programme country Governments that state the resident coordinator has demonstrated **management skills**:			
				i. Effectively			53%
				ii. Very effectively			32%
50		56		Fraction of programme country Governments (as applicable[5]) that state that the resident coordinator/humanitarian coordinator has provided a joint (humanitarian and development) impartial, comprehensive assessment of needs	PGC survey		45/85

Serial number	General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source/ responsibility[12]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
51	57, 57 (c), 57 (a)	42, 124 (h), 130 (a), 130 (c), 131	Full implementation of the following elements of the management and accountability system — fraction of United Nations development system entities that have:	HQ survey	(2015)	
			i. Updated the job description of their country representative to recognize her/his role vis-a-vis the resident coordinator		14/25	17/29
			ii. Included the resident coordinator's inputs in United Nations country team head of agency performance appraisal system in all programme countries		12/25	6/27[29]
			iii. Included United Nations country team results in entity representatives' performance appraisal systems		15/25	14/27[30]
			(Standard operating procedure indicator element 8)			
52	57(a)		Percentage of resident coordinators who "agree"[8] that they are fully empowered within the United Nations country team to:	RC survey		
			i. Make final decisions on the strategic objectives in the UNDAF			86%
			ii. Substantially increase common resource mobilization			66 %
			iii. Distribute common resources			61%
53			Percentage of resident coordinators who contribute to the performance assessment of:	RC survey		
			– Less than one third			65%
			– Between one and two thirds			19%
			– More than two thirds			16%
			of resident United Nations country team heads			
54			Percentage of resident coordinators who "agree"[8] that all United Nations country team members report to the resident coordinator regularly on:	RC survey		
			i. Resource mobilization			29%
			ii. Programme implementation performance of UNDAF elements led by the entity			79%

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
55		57 (b)		Percentage of resident coordinators who "agree" that they receive sufficiently regular and useful information from United Nations country team members to ensure effective communication with the Government regarding United Nations development system activities in the field:	RC survey		
				i. Agree			51%
				ii. Strongly agree			18%
56	a	57 (c)	124 (j), 42, 124 (h), 130 (a), 130 (c), 131	Percentage of resident coordinators who "agree" that United Nations system field representatives enjoy sufficient delegated authority to respond effectively and efficiently to national needs and priorities:	RC survey		
				i. Agree			71%
				ii. Strongly agree			15%
	b			Percentage of resident coordinators who have signed delegation of authority letters on UNDP business to a deputy UNDP official, including for:		(2015)	
				i. Resource mobilization		88%	81%
				ii. Responsibility for operational activities		–	90%
57		57 (d)		Fraction of programme countries that had a departing resident coordinator in the past two years and were duly informed of when the tenure of the outgoing resident coordinator was coming to an end	PCG survey[4]		54/57
58	a	57 (e), 72	124 (b), 124, 92	Percentage of resident coordinators who are female:	DOCO	(2016)	
				i. Total		43%	45%
				ii. From programme countries		19%	19%
				iii. From non-programme counties		24%	26%

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
	b			Geographic diversity of resident coordinators from programme countries:		(2016)	
				i. Asia/Pacific		6%	7%
				ii. Arab States		4%	4%
				iii. Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States		1%	1%
				iv. Latin America and the Caribbean		10%	9%
				v. Africa		18%	18%
	c			Resident coordinators from non-programme countries		61% (2016)	61%
	d			Percentage of resident coordinators with entity of origin other than UNDP		43% (2016)	39%
59	a	57 (f), 55, 54		Percentage of programme country Governments that "agree" that the resident coordinator has helped to minimize duplication of efforts among the United Nations development system:	PCG survey[4]		
				i. Agree			61%
				ii. Strongly agree			16%
	b			Percentage of resident coordinators who "agree" that they have the **capacity** to avoid duplication of efforts:	RC survey		
				i. Agree			37%
				ii. Strongly agree			23%
	c			Percentage of resident coordinators who "agree" that they have the **prerogative** to avoid duplication of efforts:			
				i. Agree			33%
				ii. Strongly agree			15%
	c			Percentage of resident coordinators who "agree" that the United Nations country team has reduced overlap and duplication of work in the past four years:			
				iii. Agree			75%
				iv. Strongly agree			9%

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source/ responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
	d			Percentage of resident coordinators who "agree" that the resident coordinator has sufficient access to the expertise available within the United Nations development system:			
				i. Agree			52%
				ii. Strongly agree			21%
60	a	57 (g)	128	Fraction of UNDG entities paying their full contribution of the UNDG resident coordinator system cost-sharing arrangement	DOCO	13/19	13/19
	b			Fraction of UNDG entities that report on use and contribution to the UNDG resident coordinator cost-sharing mechanism to their respective governing body	HQ survey		14/29
	c			Total contributions paid to the UNDG resident coordinator cost-sharing arrangement	DOCO	$27.5 million (2016)	$29.4 million
	d			Shortfall to the UNDG resident coordinator cost-sharing arrangement		$8.4 million (2016)	$7.7 million
61	a	57 (h)	42, 124 (h), 130 (a), 130 (c), 131	Fraction of United Nations development system entities recognizing reporting obligations to the resident coordinator on:	HQ survey		
				i. Planning		–	14/29
				ii. Resource mobilization		–	12/29
				iii. Programme implementation performance		17/25 (2015)[31]	15/29
	b			Fraction of resident coordinators in countries with humanitarian assistance needs who "agree" that United Nations country team members regularly report to the resident coordinator in relation to the UNDAF in a way that ensures strong coherence of development and humanitarian activities:	RC survey		
				i. Agree			61%
				ii. Strongly agree			20%

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
62	a	57 (i)		Fraction of United Nations development system entities with a documented risk assessment policy that includes:	HQ survey		
				i. Security risks			24/29
				ii. Medical risks			20/29
				iii. Information technology disaster recovery risks			23/29
				iv. Business continuity risks			23/29
	b			Median percentage policy compliance rate with risk assessment policy for United Nations development system entities (once policy is developed)			n/a
63		58		Comprehensive proposal on further improvements to resident coordinator system presented to:	EOSG[3]		(i) Yes (December 2017)
				i. ECOSOC for its recommendations by end 2017 (yes/no)			
				ii. General Assembly seventy-second session for further action (yes/no)			(ii) Yes (December 2017)
IV.		**Programmatic and operational coherence and effectiveness**					
64		50 (e), 50 (d), 62, 64, 52, 66, 61	117, 119	Average number of months between the UNDAF road map development to final draft	DOCO	14 months	14 months
65	a	50 (f), 50 (e), 48, 39, 50 (d), 62, 64, 52, 66, 61, 48, 50 (b)	130 (b), 171	Fraction of programme country Governments that confirmed receipt of a report on the results achieved by the United Nations country team as a whole in the last annual cycle	PCG survey[4]	61/128 (2015)	66/110
	b			Percentage of programme country Governments, in respect of annual reports provided to them, that "agree"[8] that:			63%
				i. They receive reports regularly enough to meet their needs			68%
				ii. The information is up to date			58%
							45%

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
				iii. The results of the whole United Nations system are included			74%
				iv. Sufficient financial data is included			63%
				v. Reporting is structured around UNDAF outcomes			
				vi. Reporting is linked to national development results			
	c			Percentage of United Nations country teams that have made their annual results report publicly available	RC survey		87%
66		50 (d), 50 (e), 50 (f), 62, 64, 52, 66, 61	152	Fraction of United Nations development system entities that submitted to their governing body a plan for consolidated common support services at the country level, including in the areas of financial management, human resources, procurement, ICT and other services	HQ survey		
				i. All entities			5/29
				ii. Funds and programmes			3/9
				iii. Specialized agencies			0/8
				iv. Other entities			2/12
67	a	60	141, 137	Fraction of programme country Governments that considered adopting "Delivering as one" that were "satisfied" with the information provided to them by the resident coordinator/United Nations country team to enable them to take an informed decision on "Delivering as one"	PCG survey[4]		
				v. Satisfied		42/88	16/53
				vi. Very satisfied		22/88	2/53
	b			Percentage of resident coordinators who state that they have received "adequate" information and support from headquarters with regard to the implementation of the standard operating procedures	RC survey		
				i. Adequate			58%
				ii. Very adequate			32%
	c			Headquarters plan of action updated in the light of the mandates of the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review	DOCO		No

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
	d			Fraction of actions undertaken in the updated UNDG headquarters plan of action to address challenges and bottlenecks in relation to the roll-out of the standard operating procedures, that are:		(2016)[32]	
				i. Fully implemented		11%	
				ii. Partially implemented		70%	
				iii. Not yet implemented		19%	n/a
68		61	141	*Placeholder for new indicator when UNDG reverts back on planned actions to deliver an integrated package of support that includes:*	tbc		
				i. Programming			
				ii. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting			
				iii. Pooled and flexible financing			
				iv. Resident coordinator support			
				v. Simplification and harmonization of business practices			
				vi. Flexible and differentiated and multi-country presence			
69	a	69	146–150	Percentage of programme country Governments stating that regional commissions provide "effective" support on regional or subregional issues of greatest relevance to the country:	PCG survey[4]		
				i. Effective			50%
				ii. Very effective			7%
	b			Percentage of resident coordinators stating that regional UNDG teams provide "effective" support on regional or subregional issues of greatest relevance to the country:	RC survey	(2015)[33]	
				i. Effective		63%	68%
				ii. Very effective		17%	8%

Serial number	General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
	c		Number of joint Regional Coordination Mechanisms/Regional UNDG regional common positions (papers) to advocate on key development issues:	RCMs R-UNDG		
			i. Total		8 (2015)	4
			ii. Arab States		n/a	1
			iii. Europe and Central Asia		n/a	3
			iv. Asia and the Pacific		n/a	0
			v. Latin America and the Caribbean		n/a	0
			vi. Africa		n/a	0
	d		Percentage of resident coordinators who stated the United Nations country teams benefited "to a great extent" from the regional commissions':	RC survey		
			i. Normative and policy support work,			26%
			ii. Technical expertise			31%
			iii. Platforms for policy discussion and exchange of experience			31%
	e		Percentage of UNDAFs with a regional commission(s) participating	DOCO	32%	34%
	f		Percentage of United Nations country teams in which the relevant regional commission is a member		24%	24%
	g		*Placeholder for indicator following regional review of the Secretary-General*	tbc		
70		37, 104, 105 and 46 of ECOSOC resolution 2015/15	Fraction of United Nations country teams which have:	RC survey		
			i. Joint assessments			54%
			ii. Agreements			27%
			iii. Joint strategic frameworks			24%
			iv. Joint funding mechanisms			11%
			with Bretton Woods institutions			

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
V.		**Harmonization and simplification of business practices**					
71		50 (d), 50 (e), 50 (f), 62, 64, 52, 66, 61	155	Fraction of United Nations development system entities that presented plans to their governing bodies for intra-agency rationalization of business operations	HQ survey	10/25 (2015)	17/29
72	a	51	119	UNDG/High-level Committee on Management joint analysis completed on actions required to unpack and align common business processes for further simplification and harmonization of business practices	DOCO and HLCM		No
	b			UNDG/High-level Committee on Management policy on common business processes developed and adopted	HLCM		No
	c			Service provider models and standardized key performance indicators on customer service, pricing and delivery developed and adopted	DOCO and HLCM		No[14]
	d			Other actions on simplification and harmonization of business practices implemented (specifics to be identified over time)			
73		62, 39, 50 (d), 50 (f)	140, 141, 4, 5, 7, 12, 21, 113, 114	Percentage of United Nations country teams that have:	DOCO	(2016)	
				i. A country communications group (chaired by a head of entity)		59%	73%
				ii. A joint communication strategy approved by the country team and monitored and reported against in the United Nations country results report		44%	57%
				iii. Operations costs and budgets integrated in the overall medium-term common budgetary framework		11%	18%
				(Standard operating procedure indicator element 14, 15, 13)			

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source/responsibility[12]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
74	a	52		Fraction of United Nations development system entities that have adopted the UNDG/High-level Committee on Management mutual recognition policy (once developed)	HQ survey		Not yet developed
	b			UNDG joint analysis and policy on business processes that have potential for mutual recognition completed	DOCO and HLCM		Not yet completed
75	a	50 (d), 50 (e), 50 (f), 62, 64, 52, 66, 61		Percentage of United Nations country teams that:	DOCO		
				i. Have an approved business operations strategy (monitored and cost savings reported on)		12%	20%
				ii. Have developed a business operations strategy, but strategy is not signed by the participating United Nations country team entities (or is not being implemented/monitored)		17%	26%
				iii. Have not developed a business operations strategy		68%	54%
				(Standard operating procedure indicator element 11)			
	b			United Nations country teams with an approved business operations strategy, disaggregated by programme expenditure:		(2016)	
				i. All		17/131	26/131
				ii. High		7/34	6/27
				iii. Medium		4/39	11/45
				iv. Low		6/58	9/79
	c			Average percentage of United Nations country team members included in each approved business operations strategy	DESA desk review[13]		95%
	d			Percentage of total country-level operational activities for development expenditures delivered in countries with a business operations strategy		20% (2016)	19%[14]

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[13]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
	e			Fraction of common service lines adopted within each implemented business operations strategy:	DOCO	(2016)	
				i. Common procurement services		15/17	24/26
				ii. Common finance services		9/17	18/26
				iii. Common ICT services		16/17	25/26
				iv. Common logistics services		10/17	19/26
				v. Common human resources services		14/17	18/26
				vi. Common facility services, including common premises		13/17	14/26
	f			Percentage of resident coordinators who state that they have received "adequate" information and support from headquarters with regard to the implementation of the business operations strategy	RC survey		
				i. Adequate			61%
				ii. Very adequate			26%
	g			Percentage of operations management teams chaired by:	OMT survey		
				i. A head of entity			31%
				ii. The resident coordinator			1%
				(Standard operating procedure indicator element 12)			
	h			Percentage of operations management teams that meet at least 7 out of 10 of the UNDG criteria for an empowered such team	DOCO	50% (2016)	52%
76	a	64, 50 (d), 50 (e), 50 (f), 51, 52, 61, 62, 66		Number of agency-specific vertical centres expanded into inter-agency joint service centres	HLCM		n/a[14]
	b			Number of inter-agency service centres at the country level	DOCO and HLCM	4 (2016)	4

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
77	a	65 66, 65	154 156	Percentage of countries implementing five or more common services, based on the implementation of inter-agency agreements and common long-term agreements	OMT survey	5% (2016)	4%
	b			Percentage of countries implementing a minimum of five common long-term agreements		33% (2016)	58%
	c			Percentage of countries with 25 or more per cent of the annual United Nations financed procurement volume done by the Government			23%
	d			Fraction of United Nations development system entities that report to their respective governing bodies on efficiency savings through collaborative procurement	HQ survey		12/29
VI. Managing for results							
78	a	12, 81	172	Results-based management and system-wide results reporting across the United Nations development system reviewed	JIU[3]	In progress (2015)	In progress
				Fraction of United Nations development system entities that:	HQ survey	(2015)	
				i. Meet the United Nations Evaluation Group standards for independence		20	25/29
				ii. Have an evaluation tracking system that includes the status of evaluations and management responses		20	27/29
	b			UNDG results-based management handbook revised reflecting common methodologies for:	DOCO[3]		
				– Results-based planning [yes/no]		23/25[37]	No
				– Results-based reporting [yes/no]			No
				– Integrated results and resources frameworks [yes/no]			No

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[12]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
	c			Fraction of United Nations development system entities using the revised results-based management handbook's common methodologies for each of:	HQ survey		
				– Results-based planning			n/a
				– Results-based reporting			n/a
				– Integrated results and resources frameworks			n/a
79	a	70		Fraction of entities that have included provisions for knowledge management strategies in their strategic plans	HQ survey		22/29
	b			Fraction of United Nations development system entities implementing the UNDG policy on a system-wide open data approach for a common knowledge base (once developed)	DOCO		Not yet developed
	c			Fraction of United Nations development system entities using a common authentication system	HQ survey		15/29
80	a	71	106	Fraction of United Nations development system entities using the CEB data management platform for the system-wide data gathering and reporting needs of the CEB secretariat (once launched)	CEB		Not yet developed
	b			Fraction of United Nations development system entities implementing common standards for machine readability of data (once developed)	DOCO		Not yet developed
	c			Fraction of United Nations development system entities implementing a common open data policy that includes a set of minimum standards (once developed)			Not yet developed
81	a	74	125	Number (percentage) of United Nations development system inter-agency staff transfers[18]	HLCM		1,415 (2%)

Serial number		General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source/ responsibility[1,2]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
	b			Percentage of programme country Governments that "agree"[8] that:	PCG survey		
				i. The staff in the United Nations country team has the right mix of capacities and skills to support their country's development			76%
				ii. The country team heads of entities have the highest standards of leadership skills			85%
82		75	181	Independent review of independent system-wide evaluations considered by ECOSOC (yes/no)	DESA[3]		No
F.		**Quadrennial comprehensive policy review follow-up, monitoring and reporting**					
83		79	121	Fraction of United Nations development system entities which have planning and budgeting cycles "aligned" to the quadrennial comprehensive policy review time frame:[39]	HQ survey		
				i. Fully aligned		15/25[40]	14/27
				ii. Partially aligned			5/27
				iii. Not aligned			8/27
84		78, 79		Fraction of United Nations development system entities reporting to their governing bodies on implementation of resolution 71/243	HQ survey		
				i. Funds and programmes			6/9
				ii. Specialized agencies			5/8
				iii. Other United Nations development system entities			6/12
85	a	80		Fraction of United Nations development system entities individually submitting financial data to CEB	CEB	(2016)	
				i. Funds and programmes		9/9	9/9
				ii. Specialized agencies		13/13	13/13
				iii. Other United Nations development system entities		5/17	5/17

Serial number	General Assembly resolution 71/243 (paragraph)	General Assembly resolution 67/226 (paragraph)	Indicator	Source responsibility[a]	Baseline (year)	Report of the Secretary-General in 2018
b			Fraction of United Nations development system entities with ongoing activities at the country level that report expenditures disaggregated by country to CEB		18/39	18/39
c			Fraction of United Nations development system entities that report on expenditures disaggregated by the Sustainable Development Goals	HQ survey		6/29

(Footnotes on following page)

(Footnotes to annex)

Abbreviations (in addition to the abbreviations listed in the main part of the report): ASG, Assistant Secretary-General; DESA, Department of Economic and Social Affairs; ECA, Economic Commission for Africa; ECE, Economic Commission for Europe; ECLAC, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean; ECOSOC, Economic and Social Council; EOSG, Executive Office of the Secretary-General; ESCAP, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; ESCWA, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia; GNI, gross national income; HLCM, High-level Committee for Management; HQ, headquarters; IATI, International Aid Transparency Initiative; JIU, Joint Inspection Unit; MPTFO, Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office; ODA, official development assistance; OMT, operations management team; RC, resident coordinator; RCM, Regional Coordination Mechanism; R-UNDG, Regional United Nations Development Group; SDG, Sustainable Development Goal; tbc, to be confirmed; TTCP, task team on common premises; UNDAF, United Nations Development Assistance Framework; UNODC, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; USG, Under-Secretary-General.

Note: The monitoring and reporting framework is accompanied by a methodological note, which is available from the website of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs at https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/node/1158673.

[1] Each indicator will be reported upon annually unless otherwise indicated in a separate note.

[2] The denominator for answers to the HQ survey varies as it reflects the relevance of the question to specific entities or because entities chose not to respond to the question.

[3] The frequency of reporting is one-time or annually until completed.

[4] The frequency of reporting is biennial.

[5] Self-assessed by the respondent of the survey.

[6] WFP, IFAD, IMO, ITU, UNWTO, UPU, WHO, ITC and UNODC did not respond to the request for data.

[7] The resident coordinator survey requires respondents to answer only for their country of location. "Fraction of United Nations country teams" is therefore a subset of the total number of countries.

[8] Sum of "strongly agree" and "agree".

[9] Excludes entities that are primarily humanitarian.

[10] The intention of this indicator is not to prove a cause and effect. It only specifies whether or not there is an average decline in financial flows to countries that have recently chosen the "Delivering as one" approach.

[11] Baseline reports indicator: "Fraction of United Nations development system entities that have adopted a harmonized cost-recovery framework".

[12] Disaggregation lists overlap groupings, i.e. some countries will fall into two or more categories.

[13] $2 million of this amount was pledged as the first of five equal annual instalments beginning 2017.

[14] Parts (i) and (v) based on online desk review rather than formal database.

[15] Indicator shows the proportion of survey respondents that answered "to a large extent".

[16] New indicator that will be reported on from the results of the 2018 Department of Economic and Social Affairs surveys.

[17] Not yet available owing to transition from the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.

[18] Data is as at 31 December 2016.

[19] Data is as at 31 December 2016.

[20] Includes all staff contracts of all lengths. Excludes personnel with contract modalities of international consultant, national consultant, service contracts, international UNV, national UNV, Junior Professional Officer and Special Assistant to the Resident Coordinator. Includes global funding sources (UNDG cost sharing, donor and UNDP).

[21] For analytical purposes, some indicators are disaggregated by country-level United Nations operational activities for development programme expenditures in 2016. There are 27 programmes with high expenditures (>$200mn), 45 programmes with medium expenditures (>$50mn & <200mn) and 78 programmes with low expenditures (<$50mn). For a full breakdown of country-level expenditures, see the statistical annex, table B-4, available from https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/node/1158673.

[22] When comparing indicators 46b and 46c, it is important to note that single-entity premises and common premises are not mutually exclusive, i.e. a United Nations entity can be in common premises and still have single-entity offices in other locations. A combination of fewer single entity office premises, an increase in common premises and an increase in the average number of entities within each common premises, would together indicate consolidation of office presence.

[23] The reported premises figures are based on a database containing data collected by the Department of Safety and Security. In the database, 12 per cent of the data were insufficiently detailed to determine an appropriate classification for the purpose of the review.

[24] A common premises entails the co-location of two or more resident United Nations entities present in a country. A common premises can be established at national and subnational levels, in accordance with the UNDG Business Operations Working Group definition of common premises, adopted February 2017.

[25] Of the operations management teams stating they had common premises, only around 80 per cent provided information on the number of United Nations development system entities within each common premises, and this is therefore a sub-set of all operations management team responses.

[26] A United Nations House entails the co-location of two or more resident United Nations entities present in a country as well as the Office of the Resident Coordinator. The United Nations House is not necessarily a standalone building, and it may have satellite premises and be referred to as a United Nations House annex. There can only be one United Nations House in any given country. The name United Nations House is conferred upon recommendation of UNDG.

[27] Indicator will be reported on from 2019.

[28] The baseline shows the average response to the use of (i) national procurement systems, (ii) national financial systems, (iii) national monitoring and reporting systems, and (iv) national statistical systems.

[29] In the 2015 Survey, headquarters of entities responded to a yes/no question for this sub-indicator. In the 2017 survey, respondents were asked for more details. The fraction 6/27 refers to the number of entities that responded "Yes, this is done in all programme countries". See the headquarters survey report for more details (available from www.un.org/ecosoc/en/node/1158673).

[30] IFAD, IMO, ITU, UNWTO, UPU and UNODC did not respond to the request for data.

[31] Fraction of entities recognizing reporting obligations to the resident coordinator on resource mobilization and programme implementation performance of any UNDAF/ "Delivering as one" programme elements led by the entity.

[32] These figures reflect the implementation status of the Headquarters plan of action version 2.0, endorsed by UNDG in June 2016. The updated plan of action version 3.0, consisting of rolled-over actions and reflecting the relevant 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review mandates, is expected to be endorsed in 2018.

[33] The response metric in 2015 was strongly agree/somewhat agree/somewhat disagree/strongly disagree.

[34] The High-level Committee on Management has taken a decision to review the global service centres (see CEB/2017/3).

[35] Based on 13 of the 26 business operating strategies that were provided by DOCO and included a signature page.

[36] Reported decline is due to the Afghanistan United Nations country team reporting that it no longer had an approved business operating strategy in 2017. Excluding Afghanistan from the 2016 figures gives 14%.

[37] Number of United Nations development system entities using common results-based management tools and principles as identified in the 2011 UNDG Results-based Management Handbook.

[38] Inter-agency moves are based on a comparison of 2016 versus 2015 data, comprising all movement of staff across organizations (moves across departments of the Secretariat are not counted as inter-agency moves).

[39] Excludes the 12 Secretariat departments, including regional commissions, as they have a different planning and budgetary cycle.

[40] Reported decline is due to the addition of the answer option "partially aligned" for entities with two-year cycles.